WATERLOO

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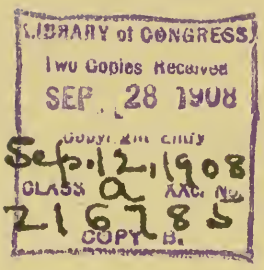

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WATERLOO

INTRODUCTORY

The warder of the Tower has his bout with the citizen on the green; Sir Walter Raleigh looks on from above, and the lieutenant's wife from below and neither of the three—warder, lieutenant's wife, nor the prisoner, Sir Walter—can agree with either of the other two as to what took place. Inside the Tower three different tales are told. It is reasonably certain that still another version was given when the citizen got back to town and began to talk.

How, then, can any one expect to learn exactly what occurred on Sunday, June 18th, 1815, in front of the village of Mont-Saint-Jean? Many witnesses testify, and the conflict of testimony is utterly irreconcilable. Much of the battle was not seen by Napoleon, and much of it was hidden from Wellington. Every officer who took part in it and who afterward wrote about it contributed something to the story, but what officer could tell it all?

From the day after the battle down to the present time, men and women have studied

the field itself, have pored over dispatches, have devoured Memoirs, have eagerly listened to the slightest word which anybody who was in possession of a fact had to say about Waterloo: yet a mystery hangs over the entire campaign.

Did Wellington really believe that he fought D'Erlon's corps at Quatre Bras? He says so, positively, in his official report of the action. Yet we *know* that D'Erlon's corps did not come even within striking distance, at any time during the day. Full of inaccuracies as his account of the battle is, the Duke would never correct the statement; nor could he ever be persuaded to give any other. In fact, whenever the subject was mentioned he grew testy; and curtly referred the questioner to his official report.

On the Prussian side, there was a current of intense feeling against Wellington; but there were such powerful motives for silence that the truth crept out slowly, and at long intervals. At first, Waterloo was claimed to be an English victory. Wellington led the way in this by his slighting reference to "the flank movement of Bülow." No one would gather from the Duke's report that 16,000 of the French troops, during the afternoon

of the 18th, had been fighting desperately, for several hours to hold the Prussians in check. No one could possibly learn from this report the fact that the French did not give way on the English front until the cannon balls of the oncoming Prussians of Zeiten's corps were crossing those of the English batteries which swept the approaches to Mont-Saint-Jean. Reading Wellington's official report of the battle, one would believe that the Prussians arrived after the fight was won—that they had nothing to do but chase the defeated. Only by degrees did the world learn that Wellington entirely disregarded the pledge he had given Blücher at the conference in May; that he wrote Blücher a letter on the morning of June 16th that was full of deception; left his troops widely scattered when the enemy was upon him; gave orders which his lieutenants had the nerve and the wisdom to violate, and was saved from annihilation at the very opening of the campaign by the incredible mistakes of Napoleon's officers and the heroic gallantry of the Prussians. Lord Wolseley complacently states that Wellington was an English gentleman of the highest type and, therefore, incapable of falsehood. Yet

the Duke's official report states that on the 15th he ordered the concentration of his army at Quatre Bras; *and Lord Wolseley demonstrates that the statement was untrue.* It was on Nivelles that a partial concentration was ordered, and had the orders been obeyed the campaign would have been wrecked.

Only of late years has it been perfectly clear that at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon of June 18th Napoleon had to divide his army, and to withhold the corps of Lobau which had been ordered to support the great charge of D'Erlon and Ney. Suppose this corps of fresh men had been thrown against the English line when it had already been well-nigh broken. At the time the premature cavalry charges were being made, and the English, in squares, were suffering so terribly from the French skirmishers and artillery, suppose 16,000 men whom Napoleon had sent to drive the Prussians back from Plancenoit, where they threatened his rear, had been in hand to clinch the cavalry charges! How could the English have prevented these fresh troops from pouring through the gap in their line behind La Haye-Sainte?

Only of late years has it been generally known that it was the arrival of Zeiten's Prussians on his left that released the troops with which Wellington filled this break in his line.

It was only when the Prussians of Zeiten's corps, breaking through to the right of the French who were attacking the English and to the left of the French who were withstanding Blücher, came thundering on their flank that the French army cried *"Treachery! Treachery!"* and dissolved in universal dismay.

As to Napoleon, whenever he talked of Waterloo he either confined himself to despairing ejaculations or involved himself in contradictions. He blamed himself for not having reconnoitered Wellington's position; he admitted that he had not had a good view of the field; he confessed that he had made a mistake in changing his plan of assailing the English right; he denied giving the order for the heavy cavalry to charge, although this order had been carried by his own aide-de-camp, Count Flahaut—the father of one or two of Hortense's queerly mixed brood of children; and he severely blamed D'Erlon, Ney and Grouchy.

A curious evidence of the difficulty of learning the truth about Waterloo is to be found in Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables." Describing the struggle for Hougoumont, he speaks of the fight in the chapel. He represents the sacred building as having gone through all the horrors of war, having been splashed with blood, having been torn by shot and shell, and having been ravaged by fire. All this seems probable enough, and yet the English authoress of "Waterloo Days" visited the battlefield a few hours after the fight and she makes particular mention of this same chapel; and she declares that it "stood uninjured"! Listen to this lady—Charlotte Eaton: "No shot or shell had penetrated its sacred walls; and no sacrilegious hand had dared to violate its humble altar, which was still adorned with its ancient ornaments and its customary care." This is quite different from Hugo's "Soldiers massacred each other in the chapel."

After Hugo's famous description of Waterloo appeared, all the world talked of "the old road of Ohain" which had, the novelist declared, been the pitfall and the tomb of the French cavalry. Painters caught up the theme, and the legend lives on imperishable

canvas. But now history discards the story. The road from Ohain to Braine l'Alleud *does* become a hollow way, between steep banks, for about 400 yards; but the French were aware of the fact, and the cavalry did *not* charge across the trench. The charges passed over the road where it was on a level with the plain. It *is* true, however, that in the bewildering movements incident to charge and countercharge, a small body of French cavalry came upon this "hollow way," walked their horses down the bank, got upon the road, and were about to ride up the other bank to get at the English, when the English cavalry charged the road, making it impossible for the French to mount the bank. They then rode up "the hollow way,"—hacked at by the English above,—until they reached the level ground, when they retired into the open field to reform.

There has been much controversy as to whether the Duke of Wellington rode over to Blücher's camp on the night of the 17th. There is now conclusive evidence that no such visit was made.

In Archibald Forbes's "Camps, Quarters and Casual Places," published in 1896, we find: "Quite recently there have been found

and are now in the possession of the Rev. Frederick Gurney, the grandson of the late Sir John Gurney, the notes of a 'conversation with the Duke of Wellington and Baron Gurney and Mr. Justice Williams, Judges on Circuit, at Strathfieldsaye House, on 24th February, 1837.' The annotator was Baron Gurney, to the following effect: 'The conversation had been commenced by my inquiring of him (the Duke) whether a story which I had heard was true of his having ridden over to Blücher on the night before the battle of Waterloo, and returned on the same horse. He said, "No, that was not so. I did not see Blücher on the day before Waterloo. I saw him the day before, on the day of Quatre Bras. I saw him after Waterloo, and he kissed me. He embraced me on horseback. I had communicated with him the day before Waterloo." The rest of the conversation made no further reference to the topic of the ride to Wavre.' "

In Houssaye's "1815" the statement is made that the French troops did not receive their rations on the night of the 17th until after midnight, or even later.

The truth seems to be that some of the troops got nothing at all to eat. They went

into the fight on empty stomachs—stimulated by a drink of brandy. The enemy, of course, suffered no such disadvantage, for ample supplies came from Brussels. Again, the English had camp-fires to keep themselves warm and to dry their clothing; the French had no fires, and went into action chilled, and in wet clothing.

To understand the physical disadvantage against which the French had to struggle, we should remember that they had to charge *up hill over miry ground.* The English were stationary on the crest, excepting when they charged, and *then* they charged *down hill.* Those who have walked over a ploughed field, or who have galloped a horse up a miry slope, will know how to appreciate the immense difficulties under which the French labored.

WATERLOO

CHAPTER I

In 1815 the Emperor was no longer a lean, sinewy, tireless, eternally vigilant human tiger—the Napoleon of Rivoli and Marengo. He was no longer the consummate General-in-Chief of Austerlitz and Wagram. The mysterious lethargy which had overwhelmed him at the critical hour of Borodino, when he withheld the order for the Old Guard to charge and convert the Russian defeat into a decisive disaster, had been the first visit of the Evil Genius which was to come again. The strange loss of *the power to decide* between two totally different lines of action, which, at the Château Düben had kept him idle two days, lolling on a sofa, or sitting at his writing-table tracing on the paper big school-boy letters, was to become a recurrent calamity, puzzling all who knew him, and paralyzing the action of his lieutenants in the most critical emergencies.

At Leipsic the reins had fallen from his hands; only one permanent bridge over the deep river in his rear had been provided to let him out of the death trap; and when the strong currents of the rout tore through the frantic city, the great Napoleon drifted with the furious tide, whistling vacantly.

The same unexplainable *eclipse of genius,* which General E. P. Alexander described as occurring to Stonewall Jackson, in the Malvern Hill movements of our Civil War, happened to the French Emperor, time and again, after that first collapse at Borodino.

In Spain he ordered a madly reckless charge of his Polish Light Cavalry against the heights of Sommo Sierra, where the Spanish army was entrenched and where the position easily admitted of successful flanking, got his best troops wastefully butchered—and could not afterward remember who gave the order to charge!

In Dresden, in 1813, he had won a brilliant victory which needed only to be ruthlessly pushed; and he was pushing it with all his tremendous driving power when, in the twinkle of an eye, his Evil Genius descended upon him, took his strength away, held him in invisible but inexorable bonds;—and when the

spell passed, the fruits of the glorious triumph were all gone, and Despair had thrown its baleful shadow athwart every possible line of action.

The mighty Emperor, in years gone by, had overdrawn his account at the bank of Nature, and his drafts were now coming back on him, protested. He who had once slept too little, now slept too much. Often in the earlier campaigns he had abstained from eating; now he over-ate. The reckless exposures and the intensely sustained labor of sixteen hours out of the twenty-four were taking their revenge. The corpulent Napoleon now loved his ease, was soon fatigued, spent hours in the tepid bath, and slept away the early morning when every advance of the sunbeam meant lost ground to the eagles of France.

Talkative, when he had once been reticent; undecided, where he had been resolute; careless, where he had been indefatigable and cautious; despondent, where he had been serenely confident, the Emperor who had sprung with hawk-like determination upon the plotting Bourbons, had clutched their unsuspecting Duc D'Enghien, dragged him to Paris in the night, shot him, and buried him in a ditch before day—this Emperor did

not have enough of that terrific energy left to even fling the traitors, Fouché and Talleyrand, into prison.

He knew that these two men were at their old tricks again, but he could not act. Looking at Fouché calmly, Napoleon said, "I ought to have you shot." Nothing could prove more conclusively that the Napoleon of old no longer lived. Had he been the man of Brumaire, or Lodi, or Jena, he would have shot the traitor first, and talked about it afterward.

In the sere and yellow leaf of life, but still Titanic in his proportions, the Emperor, once the charity-boy of Brienne,—he who fought the whole school when the young aristocrats of France made fun of his shabby clothes and Corsican birth,—*stood at bay against a world in arms.*

Feudalism against him: Caste against him: Hereditary Aristocracy against him: The Divine Right of Kings against him; and above all, the ignorance, the prejudice, and *the unwillingness of mankind to be forced out of old ruts* were against him. Against him was a Church hierarchy which panted for ancient powers and immunities and wealth. Against him were the Privileged Few of every

government on earth—*those who feast on Class legislation and resent interruption.* Against him were all those who denied the right of a nation to choose its own ruler, those who hated the dogma that the true foundation to government is the consent of the governed. To meet so powerful a combination, the *one* sure resource was that from which Napoleon shrank in horror—an appeal to the Jacobins, the Sansculottes, the fierce men of the masses who hated the priest and the aristocrat.

"When one has had misfortunes one no longer has the confidence which is necessary to success."

With this mournful remark, made in private to that noble old Revolutionary patriot, Carnot, the Emperor made ready to leave Paris to join his army.

In gathering up the scattered remnants of his former hosts Napoleon had worked at a vast disadvantage. Time and money were what he needed most. He had not enough of either.

His escape from Elba had found the Congress of Vienna still in session. The Kings who had pulled him off his throne, in 1814, were all in Vienna, together. The armies which had outnumbered him and crushed him,

were still in battle array. The traitors who had plotted his overthrow, the traitors who had deserted him on the field of battle—the Talleyrands, on the one hand, and the Marmonts on the other—were all in lusty life, ready to make sure of their guilty heads by bringing the wounded colossus down.

In the midst of the splendid festivities in Vienna; in the midst of the pomps and parades, the jubilations over the fall of the one Throned Democrat of the world; in the midst of the congratulations, the gayeties, the feasting and dancing, the illuminations and the joyous music, there comes the clap of thunder from the clear sky.

Napoleon has left Elba!

In Dumas's story, "Twenty Years After," do you remember that thrilling chapter in which the news is brought to the immortal Three that their deadly foe, Mordaunt, *whom they supposed they had killed,* is alive? Do you remember how Athos, the loftiest man of the Three, rose *and took down his sword,* which he had momentarily hung upon the wall, *gravely buckling it around him?* A desperate man is on his track; his sword must be at his hand.

So it was with the European Kings, at

Vienna. They had banded themselves together to break the scepter of the Crowned Democrat whose Civil Code, with its glorious maxims, all tending to *Justice* and to *Equality before the law,* was a deadly menace to the existence of *Divine Right* and *Special Privilege.* They had deceived their own peoples with lies about Napoleon, and with promises of reforms which they never meant to keep; they had deluged France with a flood of foreign invasion that swept all before it; they had bought the Fouchés and Talleyrands; they had seduced the Murats and Bernadottes and Moreaus and Marmonts; they had captured Napoleon's wife and child, and had deafened their ears and hardened their hearts to the appeals of the husband and father. They had stricken the sword out of his hand, the crown off his head. They thought that they had made an end of this "Disturber of the Public Peace"—this enthroned Democrat, whose levelling watchword of *"All careers open to talent,"* they hated as a tyrant hates a rebel, as *despotism hates liberty.* And now *Napoleon was in France again.* No wonder that consternation seized Vienna.

"Look to yourself; the lion is loose!" was

the warning cry which a King of France had sounded in the ears of a false and affrighted King of England, ages before. If Richard Coeur de Lion's escape from the Castle of Dürrenstein turned to water the blood of Philip and John, the sensation in Europe was as nothing compared to that created by Napoleon's escape from Elba.

Back to France! In those three words burns the purpose of the European Kings. The Russian army is far advanced on its homeward march, but it must be halted; the tired feet of the soldiers must not rest an hour. *Back to France!* The Austrian legions are at home, ready to enjoy the well-earned rest. Must the bugles call once more?—once more the streets and the lanes thrill at the beat of the drums? *Back to France!* The Prussian and the British armies have not had time to start home. They are in cantonments, in the Low Countries, close to the frontier of France. Old Blücher—*"that drunken hussar who has given me as much trouble as anybody,"* as Napoleon used to say—is already in the saddle, with a splendid staff which plans his campaigns for him.

The Duke of Wellington, the hero of the Congress of Vienna, must now hasten to

Brussels to take command of his army. All the world believes that Napoleon will force the fighting, and that he will strike the enemy nearest him, there on the Belgian frontier.

Thus, in 1815, as the month of June lavishes its splendors on the earth, the eyes of all Christendom are fastened upon Napoleon Bonaparte. It is hardly too much to say that the world stands still, this fateful month, to watch the unequal fight—Napoleon against the Kings!

How hard it is to understand the delusion under which some of the best men of the time labored! With eyes to see, why were they so blind? With ears to hear, why were they so deaf?

Grattan!—why did *your* electric oratory smite with its lightnings this great enemy of tyranny, when Ireland, *your own home,* was bleeding under the remorseless cruelty of the very system which Napoleon had struggled to tear down? La Fayette!—why were *you* throwing stumbling blocks in this big man's way, fettering him with shackles and cords, when your French Samson needed the uttermost length of his locks?

Why was it that every Liberal in Europe could not realize as Carnot did,—he of the

Great Committee which piloted France through the storm of the Revolution!—that in Napoleon's fate, *at that time,* was bound up the best interests of the human race?

Behind the confederated Kings *lurked the Ancient Régime.* It panted for life. It wanted to re-establish the blessed order of things in which the Few, booted and spurred, put into governmental form their modest claim to the privilege of riding the Many. It wanted to stamp out the revolutionary principles which had been *lifting the masses,* and lowering the monstrous pretensions of the classes.

Had not Metternich declared, "There can be no peace with such principles"? Had not the restored Bourbons of 1814 proved to an astonished world that they had learned nothing, and forgotten nothing? Had they not set about annihilating the glorious work of reform which had cost France so much—so much in consecrated toil, so much in well-spent treasure, so much in patriotic sacrifice, so much in heroic blood? Had they not done their level best, in 1814, to blow the trump of resurrection for every abuse, every wrong which France had buried amid the rejoicings of the Progressives all over the world?

What was the "Revolution of July, 1848," but the final triumph of Napoleon Bonaparte? *It was that and nothing more.* Had France been true to herself in 1815 there would have been no Bourbon Charles the Tenth; there would have been no Bourbon Louis Philippe; there would have been no occasion for the long postponement of the supremacy of the Revolutionary Principles.

"With such principles there can be no peace," said Metternich, the favorite minister of the Confederated Kings; and what La Fayette ought to have known, and Grattan ought to have known, and the Progressives everywhere ought to have known, was that *the war of the allied Kings was against those democratic principles.*

Had Napoleon been willing to be *just a king as they were,* there would have been for him no Waterloo.

"Emperor, Consul, Soldier!—I owe everything *to the people!"*—declared Napoleon, throwing down the gauntlet of duel-to-the-death at the feet of Legitimacy, Divine Right and Absolutism.

No wonder the crafty Metternich, who guided the policies of hereditary kings,

snatched up the glove and said, *"With such principles there can be no peace."*

In America the masses of the people sympathized with the French Emperor, and hoped that he would win. At the Hermitage, in Tennessee, the dauntless warrior who had recently whipped the flower of Wellington's army at New Orleans, ardently hoped that Napoleon would win.

In Great Britain tens of thousands of the followers of Fox hoped that the right of the French to select their own rulers would be vindicated. Throughout Continental Europe a powerful minority yearned for the system of the Code Napoleon, and secretly prayed for the great Law-giver's success.

Byron's friend, Hobhouse, wrote June 12, 1815: "Regarding Napoleon and his warriors as the partisans of the cause of peoples against the Conspiracy of Kings, I cannot help wishing that the French may meet with as much success as will not compromise the military character of my own countrymen. As an Englishman, I will not be a witness of their triumphs; as a lover of liberty, I would not be a spectator of their reverses. I leave Paris to-morrow."

Wherever men understood the tremendous

issues that were about to be fought out; wherever there was an intelligent comprehension of the consequences that were inevitably connected with the triumph of the Allied Kings, there was intense longing for the triumph of the French.

The French masses eagerly besought the Emperor to give them arms—but he shrank from the menace of Communism, even as he had done when he refused to arm the Russian serf against his lord.

In the hours of trial, three of Napoleon's brothers had drawn to him again. They had been much to blame for his downfall. Joseph had abandoned Paris in 1814, when there was no urgent necessity for it, and when Napoleon was flying toward it, on horseback, at headlong speed. Lucien had been wrong-headed, turbulent, making trouble at Rome and elsewhere. Jerome's management in Westphalia had incensed and disgusted Germany. As to Louis, the fourth brother, that impossible dolt and ingrate did not show his face, but retired into Switzerland. He was the younger brother with whom Napoleon had shared his slender pay when lieutenant, and who had lived with the elder brother and been taught

by him, and in every way treated by him as a father treats a son.

As to Madame Mère, the heroic old mother, she had refused to come to Paris to take part in the gorgeous ceremonial of Napoleon's Coronation; she stayed away, at Rome, where Lucien Bonaparte, in temporary disgrace, drew the maternal sympathy to the less fortunate son. No, she would not go to Napoleon in 1800, when all Europe was at his feet, and he was the King of Kings. She stayed at Rome with Lucien. But when the awful reverses came, when the scepters were broken in the hands of the Bonapartes, when Napoleon was prostrate and outlawed, Madame Letitia,—Madame Mère,—remembered only that he was her son. Josephine, frail at first, but at last loyal and loving, could not go to Elba; she was dead. Maria Louise, the Austrian wife, frail as well as false, would not go to Elba; she had already turned her lewd eyes toward the gallant Neipperg. But Madame Mère could go to Elba, and she went. And when Napoleon left for France, she soon followed. So, she is with him now, heart and soul. For the day is dark and dreary. The somber clouds hang low. Thunder rolls in the distance—rolls with sul-

len menace and ominous reverberation. And because the whole world is against her son, Madame Mère turns from the whole world *to him!* Heroic old woman! From her adamantine character was drawn the strength which laid Europe at Napoleon's feet.

In the "Barrington Sketches" is drawn a vivid picture of the last public occasion on which appeared together the most remarkable mother and son that ever lived. It was on the 8th of June, four days before Napoleon left Paris to join his army.

The dignitaries of the Empire were assembled in the Chamber of Deputies to take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor. It was a magnificent ceremonial. In the streets, on the quays and in the parks were great throngs of people, and among the military the enthusiasm was unbounded. No longer crying *"Vive l'Empereur,"* their shouts rolled in thunder tones, *"Empereur! Empereur!"* The roar of cannon shook the earth, and the air thrilled with the music of the bands. In the great and splendid Chamber of Deputies were assembled a brilliant array of the nobility of France—those who had been born great, those who had achieved greatness, and those who had had greatness thrust upon them.

They had assembled to swear loyalty to their Emperor, Napoleon—and not one of those who were present knew better the frailty of such a bond of allegiance than the Emperor himself. And when Fouché took the oath, Napoleon turned his head and looked fixedly, calmly at the traitor. Sir Jonah Barrington says that Fouché faltered and flushed. But I doubt it. Sir Jonah Barrington says that he watched Napoleon's countenance, intently studying its every detail. He says that the Emperor sat unmoved, his face somewhat shaded by the ostrich plumes of his black Spanish hat, the size of his bust concealed by "the short cloak of purple velvet, embroidered with golden bees." Sir Jonah speaks of the "high and ungraceful shoulders," and declares that he was "by no means a majestic figure." "I watched his eye. It was that of a hawk." He then describes how this brilliant glance swept from one face to another, throughout the assemblage, without a movement of the Emperor's head.

Sir Jonah describes Napoleon's mother as "a very fine old lady, apparently about sixty, but looking strong and in good health, well looking, and possessing a cheerful, *comfortable* countenance. In short, I liked her ap-

pearance; it was plain and unassuming." Then Sir Jonah tells how he settled down to study her expression to learn her sensations during the splendid ceremonial. And after the most critical attention to the varying expressions of the "comfortable countenance" of this fine old lady, Sir Jonah reaches the conclusion that the emotions which move her as the brilliant function progresses, are just those *of a mother proud of her son!*

"I could perceive no lofty sensations of gratified ambition, no towering pride, no vain and empty arrogance, as she viewed underneath her the peers and representatives of her son's dominions."

What emotion was it, then, that filled her bosom on that last great day in Paris? "A tear occasionally moistened her cheek, but it evidently proceeded from a happy rather than a painful feeling—it was the tear of parental ecstasy."

After Napoleon had been caged at St. Helena, and was being denied comforts that had become necessary to him, his mother was one of those who supplied the captive with funds. Some one remonstrated with her, telling her that she would reduce herself

to poverty, and that she would be destitute in her old age. The heroic old Corsican answered, "What does it matter? When I shall have nothing more, I will take my stick and go about *begging alms for Napoleon's mother.*"

CHAPTER II

It was half-past three on the morning of June 12th when Napoleon entered his carriage and set out for the Belgian frontier. On the 13th he was at Avesnes, on the 14th at Beaumont. One who was near the imperial carriage, on its rapid course from Paris, states that the Emperor was often asleep during the day; and that he declared that he was utterly worn out by his three months' toil. Little wonder. A man who had gone through the tremendous ordeal which Napoleon had passed since his return from Elba—an ordeal which taxed soul, mind, and body—was fortunate in being left with any strength at all. His actual hours of labor had been an average of fifteen per day, to say nothing of the anxieties, the discouragements, and the humiliations which made such enormous demands upon his fortitude, his patience, his tact, his powers of self-control.

Asked at St. Helena what had been the happiest period of his life, Napoleon answered, "The progress from Cannes to Paris."

But however elated he may have been during that bloodless re-conquest of an empire, the illusion that all France rejoiced in his return soon passed away. The indifference of Paris chilled him. The absence of many a companion-in-arms who had fought under his eagles was depressing. The knowledge that he would have to accept fettering conditions, and the services of men who denounced him the year before, mortified him. To Count Molé he declared that had he known how many concessions he would have to make, he would never have left Elba.

These were concessions to those who were called Republicans, and who were dreaming of popular self-government—for which Napoleon did not believe that France was prepared. Having become an Emperor, he was naturally opposed to a republic. Besides, a man of his vast superiority over other men naturally believes that he can achieve the best results when given a free hand. With pathetic earnestness he had appealed to the Legislative to help him save France from her enemies, reminding them of the decadent Roman senate which had wrangled over vain abstractions while the battering-rams of the barbarians thundered against the walls. To

no purpose. Until his power had been fully re-established by victory over the Allies, the Legislative would remain factious and obstructive; should the Allies triumph, the Legislative would be ready to renounce him, as in 1814.

And where were his old comrades? Where were those who had grown famous under his flag, made great by his lessons, rich and powerful by his munificence?

Lannes had fallen, during the awful days of Wagram. Duroc had been disembowelled by a cannon ball, in one of the bloody struggles of 1813. Junot had killed himself in a fit of madness. LaSalle had thrown away his life, on the Danube, in a needless cavalry charge. The gallant Poniatowski, of the royal house of Poland, had gone to a watery grave in the Elster, after the Titanic struggle at Leipsic. Bessières, Commander of the Old Guard, who had led the great cavalry charges at Eckmuhl and at Wagram, had met a soldier's death, at the head of his men, at the battle of Lutzen. Oudinot had shown incapacity during 1814, and Napoleon would have no more to do with him. Souham had acted the traitor; and when he came to seek command again, Napoleon said, "What do

you want of me? Can't you see that I do not know you any more?" Massèna renewed his allegiance to the Emperor, and sought military command; but he was too old and feeble for active service, and Napoleon disappointed his hopes of getting the 9th division. Suchet was put in command of the Army of the Alps. Jourdan was made Governor of Besancon. Brune also renewed his allegiance—an act for which the White Terror was to inflict upon him a horrible penalty. Gouvion Saint-Cyr had disobeyed Napoleon's orders in 1814, and had commanded his troops to resume the white cockade, after the 20th of March, when the Chamber voted Napoleon's deposition. The Emperor now exiled him to his castle. Sérurier and the elder Kellerman had voted for deposition, but Napoleon punished neither. Marshall Moncey would have been willing to take command again under the Emperor, but, as he had published a violent order of the day against Napoleon in 1814, he was not given a military appointment, but, like Lefebre, he was raised to the Chamber of Peers. Bernadotte sat firmly on the throne of Sweden, ready to renew the fight against his countrymen, to insure the reward of his treachery—Norway. Marmont, in mortal terror of the

vengeance which his base betrayal of Paris deserved, had fled with the Bourbons across the Rhine. Augereau had offered his services, but he was no longer the Augereau of Castiglione, and the Emperor could not overlook the personal insult to which the recreant Marshal had subjected him on the high-road, while on his way to Elba. Macdonald, who had led the great charge against the Austrian center at Wagram, had taken service under the Bourbons, and refused to serve Napoleon again. Mortier was ready for the final campaign and joined the army, but, falling sick, sold his chargers to Ney and took no part in the fighting of the Hundred Days. Berthier, the favorite of his chief, the bosom friend, the constant companion; Berthier, of whom Napoleon was so fond that he petted him like a spoilt child and would not dine in his tent until Berthier came to share the meal—Berthier had put on the King's uniform, accepted high position in his household, and fled the country upon the Emperor's return. At the castle of Bamberg, in Bavaria, he saw the Russians pouring by on their march to France. Overcome by the miseries of his situation, the remorseful traitor threw himself from an upper window and died on the pavement below.

Where was Murat? The most brilliant cavalry officer that the world ever saw had offered his sword to Napoleon, and had been spurned. God! what a mistake. The Emperor, who had retained Fouché, and given a command to Bourmont, might well have trusted his own brother-in-law, who had everything to gain by a victory which would restore the fortunes of all the Napoleonic connection. But Murat had appeared in arms against France, and this Napoleon would not forgive. Besides, he had attacked the Austrians, with whose Emperor there is reason to believe that Napoleon had come to an understanding before leaving Elba. Murat's insane conduct not only brought ruin upon himself, but destroyed whatever chance Napoleon had to detach Austria from the Alliance. So it was that Murat was in concealment at Toulon while the battle raged at Waterloo.

Greatest of Napoleon's Marshals was Davout, the victor of Auerstadt—a greater feat of arms than Napoleon's own triumph at Jena on the same day But he was wasted during the Hundred Days. He begged hard for a command, but the Emperor chose to have him remain in Paris, Minister of War, and thus the great soldier who might have

given such a different account of the Prussians, had he instead of Grouchy been sent after them, sat useless in the office in Paris, while the cannon roared at Fluerus, at Ligny, at Quatre Bras, at Wavre, at La Belle Alliance. Soult was a commander of ability, and he was loyal and full of zeal; but he had long held independent command, had practically no experience as a staff-officer; and yet he applied for and was given the position of Chief of Staff. This unfortunate choice proved to be one of the principal causes of the disaster of the campaign

And where was Ney? Where was Napoleon's "Bravest of the brave"?—the heroic figure that had held the rearguard all through the horrors of the Retreat from Moscow; the impatient lieutenant who had almost used threats of personal violence to his Emperor to compel him to sign the first abdication; the turn-coat who had gone over to the Bourbons, and who had promised the King to bring Napoleon to Paris in an iron cage?

The torrent which was bearing the exile back to his throne proved too strong for Ney; and when his own troops cried, *"Vive L'Empereur!"* Ney was swept off his feet.

When the big-hearted, impulsive man began to make explanations and denials, Napoleon stopped him with, "Embrace me, Ney."

Weeks afterward, when the Marshal felt that the Emperor must have learned about the iron cage threat, he was clumsy enough to mention the matter to Napoleon, and to claim that he merely made the remark to deceive the King as to his real design, which was to go over to the returning Emperor. Napoleon said nothing, but gave Ney one of those looks which made even Vandamme grow ill at ease.

Mortified, feeling that he had blundered throughout,—in 1814 and in 1815,—Ney withdrew to his estate.

Only at the last moment, and then out of pity, did Napoleon send word to Ney that he might serve. The message was fatal—for it cost Napoleon his throne, and Ney his life.

It was not until the 12th of June that Ney set out for the army, and he was so ill prepared that he made the journey to Avesnes in a coach, and from there to Beaumont in a peasant's cart. It was that evening that he bought from Marshal Mortier the horses he rode into battle. At the head of his army, Napoleon was cordial to his old lieutenant. "I am glad to see you, Ney. You will take

command of 1st and 2nd Army Corps. Drive the enemy on the Brussels road, and take possession of Quatre Bras."

What of the composition and temper of the army with which the great Captain was to make his last campaign?

The officers did not possess the confidence of the troops, and were themselves without confidence in the star of Napoleon. Even those generals who were at heart his friends and were ready to die by him, had little or no hope of success. How could it be otherwise? Napoleon could not inspire others with a faith which he did not himself feel; and we have overwhelming evidence to the effect that he was depressed, filled with forebodings.

It was in the troops of the rank and file that confidence lay. These were in a frenzy of enthusiasm for their Emperor, and of hatred against his enemies. In their way of judging events, their Captain had never been defeated. The Russian snows had been the cause of his failure in 1812, and the treachery of his Marshals had been his ruin in the Campaign of 1813 and 1814. Nothing but treachery could check him now; but that there *was* treason afoot was a universal suspicion among

the men of the rank and file. "Don't trust the Marshals," they were constantly saying; and even at Waterloo a soldier ran from the ranks, caught the bridle rein of the white Arabian mare that the Emperor rode, and exclaimed, "Sire, don't trust Marshal Soult! He betrays you!" "Be calm. Trust Marshal Soult, and trust me," was Napoleon's reply. Evidently here was an army that would strike with terrific force, but which might *break all to pieces on the field at the slightest evidence of bad faith on the part of its commanders.*

At the very outset, Soult's unfitness for his position as Chief of Staff was demonstrated. When orders to concentrate the army were flying as fast as couriers could bear them, Napoleon came upon the cavalry of Grouchy, at Laon, before that officer had stirred a step. *He had received no orders.* Had Napoleon been the vigilant, quickly resolute Captain of old, his Chief of Staff would have been dismissed at once. Like the leak in the dyke, *such* a mistake indicated the danger of a colossal disaster. In person, Napoleon had to order Grouchy forward; and practically the same thing had to be done with the corps of Vandamme. Soult had sent

marching orders to that officer *by a single courier,* whose horse fell with him, breaking his leg; and the poor fellow lay there all night with the undelivered order.

Both of these delays were felt throughout the campaign. The cavalry had to make a forced march of 20 leagues and this tired the horses; and in the cavalry charges of the following days the mounts of the French were jaded, while those of the enemy were fresh. Vandamme's failure to get his orders caused the combination of the Emperor to fall short of what it ought to have accomplished, and this in turn caused other losses to the end of the campaign.

Even at this late day the armies of Blücher and Wellington were spread over a front line of 35 leagues. The base of the Prussians was Liege; that of the English, Brussels and Ghent. The point of contact of the two armies was the road from Charleroi to Brussels. Napoleon determined to seize this road, strike the Allies at the point of contact and drive them apart, so that he could crush each in detail. This done, he believed that Austria would withdraw from the Alliance, the Belgians rise in his favor, Italy assert her friendship for him, and all France unite against the

Bourbons. If these very probable changes should take place, he could either conclude an honorable peace with Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, or he could safely defy them.

On the 14th of June the Emperor slept among his troops. Next morning he addressed them in the order of the day:

"Soldiers, to-day is the anniversary of Marengo and Friedland, which twice decided the fate of Europe. We were too generous after Austerlitz and Wagram. And now banded together against us, the sovereigns we left on their thrones conspire against the independence and the most sacred rights of France. They have begun by the most iniquitous aggression. Let us march to meet them; are we not the men we were then? The time has come for every Frenchman who loves his country to conquer or to die."

The army of 124,000 men to whom those burning words were addressed had been swiftly concentrated within cannon-shot of the enemy, before Blücher or Wellington had the faintest idea of what had happened. While it was possible for the French Emperor to strike at once, with the crushing weight of the whole army, *three days* were necessary to

Blücher and Wellington. *How did they get those three days?* Through the blunders and disobedience of Napoleon's own officers. Contributing immensely to the same result was the refusal of Wellington's officers to obey the orders which he sent from Brussels and which, had they been obeyed, would have left Quatre Bras in the hands of the French, and put Napoleon in overwhelming numbers *between* the scattered forces of his enemies. To have destroyed them would have been child's play for such a captain.

On the 15th of June, Wellington wrote to the Czar of Russia stating his intention to take the offensive at the end of the month. As to Blücher, that indomitable but short-sighted soldier was writing to his wife, "We shall soon enter France. We might remain here a year, for Bonaparte would never attack us."

About the time that the wife of "Marshal Forwards" was reading this reassuring letter, the Prussian army was flying before the French Emperor, and old Blücher himself, unhorsed and bruised almost to unconsciousness, had escaped capture because of the darkness, and was being borne off the lost field of Ligny.

CHAPTER III

On the morning of June 15th, at half-past three, the French army crossed the Belgian frontier.

Disobeying orders, D'Erlon did not set his troops in motion until half-past four. Receiving no orders, Vandamme did not move at all—not until the approach of Lobau's corps warned him that some mistake had been made. Gérard was ordered to start at three; he did not appear at the rendezvous until seven.

To increase the ill effect which these delays were making upon the mind of the suspicious troops, General Bourmont, commander of the head division of the 4th Corps, went over to the enemy, accompanied by his staff, some other officers, and an escort of five lancers.

This act of treachery threw the whole of the 4th Corps into confusion, and it became necessary for Gérard and General Hulot to harangue the troops to restore their confidence. Two hours were thus lost. Napoleon

had not wished to give Bourmont a command, but had yielded at the urgent entreaties of Gérard and Labedoyére.

To the credit of Blücher, it must be said that he gave the traitor a contemptuous reception, and spoke to his staff scornfully of the "cur."

Between nine and ten o'clock on the morning of the 15th of June the French reached the Sambre. At Thuin, at Ham, in the woods of Montigny, at the farm of La Tombe they had struck the Prussian outposts and driven them, killing, wounding and capturing some 500 of them. Then there was a fight for the bridge over the Sambre at Marchienne.

Too much time was lost both here and at the bridge of Charleroi. The cavalry awaited the infantry, and Vandamme, commander of the infantry, was four hours late. It was not until the Emperor himself appeared on the scene that the bridge was stormed.

At the bridge of Marchienne there was a fight of two hours, and even after the bridge had been carried it required several hours for so many troops to pass so narrow a bridge.

To a civilian it seems strange that no prep-

aration had been made, beforehand, to throw other bridges over this stream; equally so that the retreating Prussians left any bridges standing.

Amid the cheers of the inhabitants Napoleon entered Charleroi, a little after noon, and dismounted, and sat down by the side of the road. At this point he commanded a full view of the valley of the Sambre.

The troops were on the march. As they passed they recognized the Emperor, and the wildly enthusiastic cheering of the men drowned the roll of the drums. Soldiers broke ranks to run and hug the neck of Desirèe, the Emperor's horse.

And so tired was Napoleon that he fell asleep in the chair, even as he had slept on the battlefield of Jena.

From Brussels the English would come by the Charleroi road; from Namur the Prussians would come by the Nivelles road. These highways cross each other at Quatre Bras, hence the supreme importance of that position. To seize it was Napoleon's purpose, and he entrusted the task to Ney, giving him the order verbally and personally:

"Drive the enemy on the Brussels road and take up your position at Quatre Bras."

Having ordered the left wing of his army to Quatre Bras, the Emperor meant to post his right wing at Sombreff, while he, himself, with his reserve, should take position at Fluerus, to be ready to act with the right wing or the left, as circumstances might dictate.

About 10,000 Prussians were behind Gilly, protected in front by the little stream, Le Grand-Rieux. Grouchy, deceived by the length of the enemy's line, estimated their strength at 20,000, and hesitated to advance. "At most they are 10,000," said the Emperor, and he ordered Grouchy to ford the stream and take the Prussians in flank; Vandamme's division and Pajol's cavalry would attack in front.

Then the Emperor left the field to hurry the coming of Vandamme's corps. The moment Napoleon was gone, Grouchy and Vandamme began to waste time, and for two hours they were arranging the details of the movement. While they were doing so, the Prussians quietly walked off from the trap.

Enraged at the conduct of his lieutenants, the Emperor, just returned, ordered Letort to charge with four squadrons of cavalry. Two

battalions of Prussians were overtaken and cut to pieces; the others escaped into the woods of Solielmont.

It was now the close of the day, and Grouchy wished to drive out of Fluerus the two battalions of Prussians which occupied it. These were the positive orders of the Emperor, but Marshal Vandamme refused to advance any farther, saying that his troops were too tired and that, at any rate, he would take no orders from a commandant of the cavalry. As Grouchy could not take Fluerus without the support of infantry, the village remained untaken, and Napoleon's plan incomplete.

On the left wing the same failure to obey orders was even more marked. Instead of advancing upon Quatre Bras, as the Emperor distinctly told him to do, Ney posted three of his divisions at Gosselies, and tolled off nothing but the lancers and the chasseurs of the Guard to Quatre Bras.

The lancers of the Guard had got in sight of Fresnes about half-past five in the afternoon. This village was occupied by a Nassau battalion and a battery of horse artillery. They were under the command of Major Normann, who had been left without any instructions, but on hearing the sound of cannon

toward Gosselies, he had at once divined the supreme importance of Quatre Bras, and determined to defend it desperately. Had Ney continued his advance with any considerable portion of his infantry, the Nassau battalion would have been crushed. As it was, the small force of the French which had been sent forward was able to drive Major Normann out of Fresnes and along the Brussels road. In fact a squadron of the French cavalry entered Quatre Bras where there were then no English; but fearing to be cut off, did not attempt to hold the place. Prince Bernard, of Saxe-Weimar, had also acted without orders; and with the instinct of a soldier had taken the responsibility of moving his own troops to occupy this important strategical position. Under him were four Nassau battalions; therefore there were now 4,500 men with artillery to defend Quatre Bras against the 1,700 lancers and chasseurs which Ney had thrown forward.

The sound of cannon in front caused Marshal Ney to join his vanguard. Instead of realizing the necessity of ordering up infantry supports and storming the position of the enemy as he could easily have done, he made only a few feeble charges against the Nassau

infantry, and then went back to Gosselies for the night. Had he continued to advance with even one-fourth of the troops which the Emperor had given, he might have destroyed the entire force of Prince Bernard and of Major Normann before a single Englishman came within miles of the place.

Nevertheless, the Emperor had substantially gained his point. Almost without any real fighting, and in spite of the clumsy working of his great military machine, he now had 124,000 men encamped near the point of junction between the allied armies, ready to strike either. On the night of the 15th, when, at Charleroi, Napoleon examined the reports sent in by Grouchy and Ney, he reached a conclusion that was wrong, but which, fastening itself on his mind, could never be shaken, and contributed vastly to his ruin. He believed, judging from the direction in which the Prussians had retreated, that they were retreating upon Liege, their natural base of operations, instead of adhering to the design of so conducting their retreat as to be at all times in reach of the English.

The various delays of the French, and their failure to advance as far as the Emperor's orders had directed, made it possible for the in-

defatigable Blücher to bring up a large part of his army, and instead of retreating on his base,—as Napoleon thought he would do,—Blücher advanced to Sombreffe to give battle.

Toward morning, in the night of the 15th, the Prussians had evacuated Fluerus. Grouchy took possession of it, and the Emperor reached it shortly before noon. Going to the tower of a brick mill, which stood at the end of Fluerus, Napoleon had the roof breached and a platform made, upon which he could stand and view the various positions of the enemy.

The willingness of the Prussian commander to fight was partly the result of Wellington's diplomacy. The Englishman had been caught napping, and to secure time to concentrate his badly scattered forces he had given Blücher a written promise to support him. It was extremely necessary to Wellington that Blücher should stand between the English army and the French, and fight them off, until the English could get themselves together. Besides, if Blücher retreated upon Liege, the English army would be left alone before Napoleon. In that event it would have to fight with inferior forces, or fall back on its base of

operations, leaving Brussels to be occupied by the Emperor.

In 1876 there was found in the Prussian archives the letter in which Wellington encouraged his ally to make a stand. This letter was sent from the heights north of Fresnes, about two miles south of Quatre Bras, at half-past ten o'clock in the morning of the 16th. In this much-debated letter the wily Englishman misrepresents the positions of his own troops, puts them some hours nearer to the scene of action than they really were, and assures Blücher of their support if he will stand and fight. Wellington tells Blücher that he will at least be able to effect such a powerful diversion in his behalf that Napoleon will not be able to use against the Prussian more than a moiety of his army.

Lord Wolseley, in his book, "The Decline and Fall of Napoleon," admits that Wellington's statements to Blücher were false, but naively remarks, "Wellington, an English gentleman of the highest type, was wholly and absolutely incapable of anything bordering on untruth or deceit in dealing with his allies."

Lord Wolseley's ingenious explanation is that Wellington must have been deceived "by his inefficient staff."

Yet the undisputed record is that Wellington himself had issued all the orders to his scattered troops, a few hours before, and he knew precisely the distance of each division from the field.

To the "English gentleman of the highest type" it was supremely necessary that his ally should break the force of the French onset, delay its advance, and thus give himself time to concentrate his too-widely scattered troops. To influence Blücher he stated to him what he *knew* to be untrue, and made his ally a promise which he *knew* he could not keep.

CHAPTER IV

The Napoleon of the Italian campaign had said: "The Austrians lose battles because they do not know the value of fifteen minutes."

Alas! Neither the Emperor nor his lieutenants now seemed to know the value of time.

In former years the French moved forward before dawn. In this final campaign, upon which all was staked, they started late and they moved slowly, when the enemy was crowding into every minute the utmost that human energy could achieve.

Standing upon the roof of the mill-tower, Napoleon could not perceive the full strength of Blücher's position. To the Emperor it seemed that the enemy was posted opposite to him on a slope leading upward to a low range of hills with the village of Sombreff in the center. From the tower he could not see the importance of the small river Ligne, with the ravine formed by the broken ground and the stream itself. In the center of the valley was the village of Ligny, in which stood an old castle, and a church surrounded by a cemetery

enclosed by brick walls. Through this village runs the stream of Ligne. There were several other villages in the valley between the two opposing ranges of hills. The Prussian position was in reality strong, with this weakness —the open slope revealed all the movements made over it, and exposed the troops to the cannon of the French.

It was not till long after two o'clock that the French were ready to attack. Then the battery of the Guard fired the signal guns, and Vandamme dashed upon the enemy, while the military bands played "La victoire enchantant." The Prussians posted in the village, the cemetery, the church, the orchards, the houses, fought desperately. Entrenched in the old castle and in the farm buildings, they raked the advancing French with a terrible fire, which littered the ground with the dead and wounded. Under the cannonade of the French, houses burst into flames. The villages became a roaring hell, in which the maddened soldiers fought from house to house, in the streets, in the square, with a ferocity which amazed the oldest officers. No quarter was asked or given.

Driven over the Ligne, the Prussians lined the left bank, and across this brook the sol-

diers shot each other, with guns only a few feet apart. In the houses wounded men were being burned to death, and their frightful cries rang out above the roar of battle. The hot day of June was made hotter by the fierce flames which wrapped the buildings; clouds hung in the heavens, and the smoke from the guns, dense and foul, was pierced by tongues of fire from the blazing houses and by the flashes of the guns as Prussians and Frenchmen shot each other down.

After four charges in force; after sanguinary hand-to-hand fights for every hedge and wall and house; after the fiercest struggle for the brook, the Prussians fell back—the French pouring over the bridges. That Blücher had failed to blow up the bridges was a disastrous mistake.

But this was only the right wing of Blücher's army; the center and the left wing were unhurt. Blücher came down from his observatory, on the roof of the mill of Bussy, to order in person a movement on Wagnalée, from which the Prussians would take the French in flank. While the Prussians, reanimated by the presence of "Old Marshal Forwards," sprang forward with cheers, and be-

gan to drive the French back, Napoleon made ready for his master-stroke.

Ney at Quatre Bras is in the rear of the Prussians. Let him merely hold in check whatever force of English is coming from Brussels, and detach D'Erlon with his 20,000 men to fall upon the Prussian flank and rear. This done, 60,000 Prussians will be slaughtered or captured.

Directly to D'Erlon flew the order to march to the rear of the Prussian right. Colonel de Forbin-Janson, who carried the order to D'Erlon, was instructed to inform Ney, also.

This order had been sent at two o'clock. It was now half-past five. At six the Emperor expected to hear the thunder of D'Erlon's cannon in the rear of the Prussian army. As soon as he should hear that he would send in his reserves,—hurling them at the enemy's center,—cut through, block its retreat on Sombreff, and drive it back upon the guns of Vandamme and D'Erlon. For the 60,000 men of Zeiten and Pirch there would be no escape. The Emperor was greatly elated. In order to annihilate Blücher and end the war with a clap of thunder it was only necessary that Ney obey orders. So thought Na-

poleon. He said to Gérard, "It is possible that three hours hence the fate of the war may be decided." To Ney himself he had written, "The fate of France is in your hands."

With a soul full of the pride of success, the Emperor made his dispositions for the final blow.

But what thunder-cloud is that which suddenly darkens the radiant sky?

Away off there to the left, Vandamme's scouts have caught sight of a column of twenty or thirty thousand troops who march as if their intention is to turn the French flank. An aide-de-camp sent by Vandamme dashes across the field to carry this fateful message to the Emperor. Thus, with hand uplifted to strike Blücher down, he must not deal the blow—his own flank is exposed. It does not occur to Napoleon that this column on the left may be D'Erlon's corps, going in a wrong direction, by mistake. Vandamme had said they were the enemy; D'Erlon had no business to be *there;* the column *must* be Prussian or English.

Nothing can be done until an aide-de-camp can ride several miles, reconnoiter, ride back

and report. The grand attack is delayed until this can be done.

At length the aide-de-camp returns and reports that the suspicious column is D'Erlon's corps.

Filled with chagrin for not having guessed as much, and with rage for the precious hour of daylight lost, the Emperor gives the word, the grand attack begins.

Black clouds have been gathering over the winding stream of Ligne, along whose banks the fighting has raged for several miles. The lightning now begins to flash and the thunder to roll, but even the voice of the storm is lost in the more terrible voice of battle as Napoleon's batteries turn every gun on Ligny.

The Old Guard deploys in columns of attack; cuirassiers make ready to dash forward; the drums beat the charge, and the splendid array moves onward amid deafening peals of *"Vive l'Empereur!"*

Blücher has stripped his center to feed his right: he has no reserves: and the whole strength of Napoleon's power smites the Prussian center. It is swept away. As Soult wrote Davout: "It was like a scene on the stage."

The sun is now about to go down—the

storm is over—and Blücher gets a view of the whole field. His army has been cut in two. Desperately he calls in the troops on his right; desperately he gallops to his squadrons on the left to lead them to the charge. Bravely they come on in the gathering gloom to fling themselves against the French. In vain—torn by musketry and charged by the cuirassiers, they fall back. Blücher's horse is shot down and falls on his rider.

"Nostitz, now I am lost!" cries the old hero to his adjutant.

But the French dash by without noticing these two Prussians, and when the Prussians, in a countercharge, pass over the same ground, Blücher's horse is lifted and the old Marshal borne from the field.

Night puts an end to the conflict and saves the Prussian army from annihilation. Had the attack been made when Napoleon first ordered, there would have been no Blücher to rescue Wellington at Mont-Saint-Jean.

The carnage of the day had been prodigious. Twelve thousand Prussians and eighty-five hundred Frenchmen strewed the villages, the ravine, and the plain. At this cost the great Captain won his last victory.

As he returned to Fluerus that night Napoleon's heart must have been very heavy.

The fortune of France had slipped through his fingers. The enemy should have been destroyed. Had his orders been obeyed, Blücher's army would have been swept off the face of the earth. As it was, Blücher had simply received one of the ordinary drubbings to which he was so much accustomed that he was not even discouraged. Neither his staff nor his troops were demoralized. They had given way to an onset which they could not withstand; but they meant to reform, retreat to another position, and fight again.

Most of those who have written of Ligny and of the fatality which deprived both Ney and the Emperor of D'Erlon,—whose corps would have accomplished such decisive results had it gone into action at either Ligny or Quatre Bras,—dwell upon the ignorance and presumption of the staff-officer, Col. Laurent, who took it upon himself to direct the march of D'Erlon's leading column upon Ligny when it was upon its way to Quatre Bras.

But it seems to me that had the staff-officer not turned D'Erlon's corps away from Quatre Bras and toward Ligny, the Emperor's own order, sent by Forbin-Janson, would have brought about precisely the same result.

CHAPTER V

"There is my ugly boy, Arthur," said Lady Mornington on seeing Wellington at the Dublin Theater after a long absence.

Like Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, Frederick the Great, Washington, Byron, Webster, Disraeli, and many other great men, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, owed nothing to his mother!

The sentimental notion that all great men derive their strength from their mothers is an idle fancy.

Born into the ruling caste of Great Britain, Arthur Wellesley was given the best opportunities, and he improved them to the best advantage. In Hindustan he won military fame similar to that of Clive, and was finally sent to Portugal when the British Cabinet decided to make the Peninsula a base of operations against Napoleon. Displeased with the Convention of Cintra, which his superior officer concluded with Junot, after the latter had lost the battle of Vimiera, Wellington quit the Continent and returned to England, where he served in Parliament. It required

the utmost exertion of his family influence to again secure employment for him in the army.

His subsequent career in Spain, where, by a cautious steadiness and unflinching courage, he won victory after victory over Napoleon's lieutenants, left him the military hero of the day when Marmont's treachery had put an end to the campaign of 1814.

He was at the Vienna Congress when Napoleon left Elba, and the Kings turned to him, saying: "You must once more save Europe."

The Duke of Wellington, associated as he is with the national pride of the country, is England's military hero. The greatness of the Duke is the greatness of old England. He identified himself wholly with the government of his country, believed that it was the best that human wit could devise, antagonized innovations, detested reform measures, and had a hearty contempt for the populace.

It is doubtful if any human being ever *loved* Wellington. His wife did not; his sons did not; his officers did not; his soldiers did not. Yet he had the unbounded confidence of his army, the warm admiration of most Englishmen, and the personal esteem of

every sovereign of Europe. Like Washington, he had few intimacies; and like Washington, he was exacting even in very small matters.

That he should have won the title of "the Iron Duke" is significant. In many respects he was a hard man. *He was never known to laugh.*

"Kiss me, Hardy," said the dying Nelson to his bosom friend. We cannot imagine any such tenderness of sentiment in Wellington.

Nelson came near throwing his fame away for a wanton, as Marc Antony did: we could never imagine Wellington in love with a woman. He married with as little excitement as he managed a military maneuver, and he begat children from a stern sense of duty.

He heartily favored flogging in the army, and he bitterly opposed penny postage.

In his old age he was asked whether he found any advantage in being "great." He answered, "Yes, I can afford to do without servants. I brush my own clothes, and if I was strong enough I would black my own shoes."

He had ridden horseback all his life, but had a notoriously bad seat. Often in a fox

hunt he gave his horse a fall, or was thrown. Like Napoleon, he always shaved himself. He was a man of few words, never lost his head, and was as brave as Julius Caesar.

It is Thackeray who relates the incident which illustrates how the English regarded the Duke in his old age.

Two urchins, one a Londoner and the other not, see a soldierly figure ride by along the street.

" 'That's the Duke,' says the Londoner.

" 'The Duke?' questions the other.

" 'Of Wellington, booby!' exclaims the Londoner, scornful of the ignoramus who did not know that when one spoke of 'the Duke,' Wellington alone *could* be meant."

CHAPTER VI

"There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men".

The dance is the harmony of motion wedded to the harmony of sound. Since men have loved music they have loved dancing, and the perfection of the dance will be a fascination until the love of music is dead in the souls of men.

Herodias dances before the King, and off goes the head of John—a victim to the sensuous poetry of motion. Nor was Herod the only intoxicated monarch whose imperial will was seduced by music and the dance. Ancient history is full of it—this witchery of voluptuous music and voluptuous motion, the sway of the woman of the dance.

As far back as we can see into the dim ages of the past, the record is the same. The story of the witchery of melodious sound and the rhythmical movement which brings the charm of music to the eye as well as to the ear, is traced in whatever of sculpture, of painting,

of literature has been saved from the ravages of time. Graven on the stone, carved upon the frieze, cast in the entablature, delicately wreathed about the vase, we still see how the ancients loved music, and how the music made the dance.

Out of the annals of the dead nations come the living names of their national dances, and it may be that the fire which burned in the heart of the Spartan when he went through the Pyrrhic dance was the same as that which kindled the ardor of the Red Man of the American tribes when he celebrated his war dance.

There was the dance of the Furies, the dance of the Harvest, the dance of May-day, the dance of the religious rite, the dance of rejoicing, the dance of the marriage feast, the dance of the funeral rite.

In the Greek Chorus the whole city gave itself to the melody of sound and the harmony of motion, just as the *farandola* of to-day is, in Southern France, an unlooped garland of music and dance drawing into itself the entire community. Only the Roman refused to dance, and the Roman is the most unlovely national character in history.

"Wine, woman, and song!" cried the rev-

ellers in the dawn of time; "Wine, woman, and song!" shout the revellers now; and between these flowery banks of Pleasure runs the steady, everlasting stream of earnest purpose, consecration to duty, and love of noble standards, that bears precious freight toward havens yet unknown.

As Thackeray says, there never was, since the days of Darius, such a brilliant train of camp-followers as hung around Wellington's army in the Low Countries, in the year 1815. French noblesse who had fled their country, English lords and ladies who had crossed over to the Continent, diplomats connected with various European courts, travellers who had stopped at Brussels to await the issues of the campaign—all these crowded the city. With the officers of the English and Belgian armies, this made a brilliant and distinguished society, and many social entertainments were being given.

Owing principally to the fact that hers was connected with the march of the English army and the crowning victory of Waterloo, the Duchess of Richmond's ball has, historically, obliterated every other. Lord Byron immortalized it in "Childe Harold"; and

after him came Thackeray with his masterly descriptions in "Vanity Fair."

Until a comparatively recent date it has not been known for certain where the ball took place, for it was well known that it was not given in the house which the Duke of Richmond was temporarily occupying.

Sir William Fraser has published a most interesting account of how his industrious search for the famous ball-room was at length rewarded by the discovery that the place actually used for the dance was the store-room, or dépot, of a carriage-builder, whose establishment joined the rear of the Duke of Richmond's palace. Instead of being a "high-hall" as Byron imagined, it was a low room, 13 feet high, 54 feet broad, and 120 feet long. For the two hundred invited guests it afforded ample accommodations.

We can assume that this storage-room for vehicles had been transformed with hangings and decorations until it presented an appearance sufficiently brilliant, and we can imagine the eagerness with which "the beauty and the chivalry" had looked forward to this night. We can imagine the intrigues for tickets. We can imagine fair women leaning on the arms

of the brave men, and the crash of music, as the band strikes up, and then,

"On with the dance!"

Yonder is the Prince of Orange, heir to the illustrious house which boasts such names as William III and William the Silent. To whom does the modern world owe more,—for freedom of conscience, of speech, of person,—than to the heroic Dutchman who stood, almost alone—and triumphantly!—against the whole power of the Spanish Empire and the Pope? From whom have we received a finer lesson in patriotism, and in desperate determination to be free, than from William III when, as the armies of the Grand Monarch came irresistibly on, sternly ordered, *"Cut the dykes! We'll give Holland back to the sea, rather than become the slaves of France!"*

Over there is the Duke of Brunswick—whose father, in 1789, had led into France that ill-fated invasion which struggled with mud and rain and green grapes until it was in condition to be demoralized by the slight cannonade of Dumouriez and the cavalry charge of Kellerman—thus bringing derision upon its commander who had issued the fa-

mous proclamation in which he threatened Paris with destruction.

There is Pozzo di Borgo, the Corsican, the boyhood acquaintance of Napoleon. They had taken different sides in petty Corsican politics; there had been an affray at the polls, Pozzo had been knocked down and roughly handled by the Bonaparte faction. Here was the origin of one of the most active, vindictive and persistent hatreds on record; and there is no doubt whatever that the Corsican gentleman who now glitters in this brilliant throng, in the Duchess of Richmond's ball-room, has done Napoleon a vast deal of harm. It was he, more than any other, who influenced the Emperor Alexander against Napoleon. It was he, more than any other, who in 1814 persuaded the Allies to revoke the order, already given, to retreat upon the Rhine and, instead, to march straight upon Paris.

More notable still, is another opponent of Napoleon whom we see in this famous ball-room. It is Sir Sydney Smith. *"That man caused me to miss my destiny!"* exclaimed Napoleon. For Sir Sydney was the unconquerable Englishman who threw himself into Acre and showed the Turks how to defend it.

Against those walls the French dashed themselves in vain. Baffled, exhausted, his rear threatened, his heart filled with impotent rage, Napoleon had to abandon his gorgeous visions of Eastern conquest and drink to the dregs a bitter cup of humiliation.

Of course the Duke of Wellington is here, and many of the officers of his army. The French nobles (emigrés) are represented by some of the proudest names of the *Ancient Régime*. Ladies of high degree are present—ladies of beauty, wit, and grace, some from Belgium, France, England, but none of these are so well known as a certain pretty, doting, neglected wife named Amelia, and a dashing, brilliant, wicked adventuress, Becky Sharp, whom Thackeray brings to the ball. As long as there is such a thing as English literature these two, together with the prodigal George Osborne and honest William Dobbin, will move amid those revellers and live amid the stirring scenes of the Eve of Waterloo.

> "A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
> Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
> Soft eyes looked love to eyes that spake again,
> And all went merrily as a marriage bell."

There was no boom of cannon to halt the dance. There was no opening roar of battle

that broke in upon the revelry. The Duke of Wellington sat down comfortably to the table where the midnight supper was served, and the officers remained at the ball hours later. Then, as they had been ordered, they withdrew quietly, one by one, and finally the Duke came to make his own adieus.

The youngest daughter of the Duchess of Richmond was awakened and brought down to the ball-room. With her tiny fingers she buckled on the great soldier's sword.

Do we not all of us recall how Major Dobbin seeks out Captain George, who has been madly gaming and madly drinking?

" 'Hullo, Dob! Come and drink, old Dob! The Duke's wine is famous.'

" 'Come out, George,' said Dobbin gravely. 'Don't drink.'

"Dobbin went up to him and whispered something to him, at which George, giving a start and a wild hurray, tossed off his glass, clapped it on the table, and walked away speedily on his friend's arm."

What Dobbin said was this: "The enemy has crossed the Sambre: our left is already engaged. Come away. We are to march in three hours."

"And there was mounting in hot haste; the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star,
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—'The foe! They come, they come!'"

Again, Thackeray: "The sun was just rising as the march began—it was a gallant sight—the band led the column, playing the regimental march; then came the major in command, riding upon Pyramus, his stout charger; then marched the grenadiers, their captain at their head; in the center were the colors, borne by the senior and junior ensigns; then George came marching at the head of his company. He looked up, and smiled at Amelia, and passed on; and even the sound of music died away." And Amelia and thousands of other wives go back to wait, to weep, to pray.

How hard it is to believe that after the officers had hurried away to join their commands, after the Duke of Wellington had left, after every young man and young woman in the ball-room *knew* that their late partners were hastening to the battlefield, *the ball should continue.*

Instead of being broken up by the booming cannon and the agonizing leavetakings imagined by Lord Byron, the revel went on till morning, when it ended in the usual way.

Not until six in the morning of June 16th did the Duke of Wellington leave Brussels, and, had the orders which he issued the evening before been carried out, he would have found Ney between himself and the English army, with the Prussians annihilated! Acting upon their own responsibility, Major Normann and the Prince of Saxe-Weimar had taken possession of Quatre Bras. The Prince of Orange's Chief of Staff, Constant Rebecque, delivered to the officers the written orders of Wellington, but told them verbally, in effect, not to obey. As a matter of fact, these officers paid no attention to the written orders, but acted upon their own judgment. They could see for themselves what ought to be done, and they did it. They all rushed to Quatre Bras, determined to hold it at whatever cost.

At ten o'clock, Wellington arrived, and he congratulated General Perponcher on being in possession of Quatre Bras, whose vital importance he now recognized for the first time.

Not being attacked at Quatre Bras, Wellington rode to the heights of Brye to see, for himself, what was going on at Ligny. He and Blücher went up in the mill of Bussy, from whose roof they could plainly see every movement of the French.

It was now too late for the Prussians to escape battle. Therefore, Wellington, in parting from Blücher to return to Quatre Bras, coolly said, "I will come to your support provided I am not attacked myself." To his aide Wellington remarked, "If he fights here he will be damnably licked."

No wonder that Gneisenau, Chief of Staff to Blücher, formed the opinion that Wellington was a "master-knave."

Had the Prussian hero, Blücher, been as craftily selfish as Wellington, there would have been no Waterloo.

On his arrival at Quatre Bras, Wellington found that Ney had at last realized the true meaning of the Emperor's orders, and he made frantic efforts to regain what he had lost. Too late. Vainly Jerome Bonaparte fights with desperate courage to win and hold the Boissou wood: vainly Kellerman hurls his handful of horsemen upon the ever-increasing infantry of the enemy; vainly Ney

exposes himself to the hottest fire, rallying broken lines and leading them back to the charge. Too late. Regiment after regiment of the English army arrives. In hot haste, the young officers, who, a few hours ago, had been dancing at the Duchess of Richmond's ball, throw themselves into the fight, still in the silk stockings and buckled shoes of the ball-room.

So impetuous had been the assault of the French that at first the English and Hanoverians were driven. The Duke of Wellington, narrowly escaping capture, was borne backward by the rout. In person he rallied his men and led a cavalry charge which broke on the French line. Not until the coming up of Picton's division did the tide decisively turn; but then the French, heavily outnumbered, were worsted at all points.

"The fate of France is in your hands," the Emperor had written, and Ney had not understood. All the hours of the morning of the 16th he had not understood. Precious hours had glided by unimproved. Now it is afternoon, and at last Ney understands.

And it is too late. Were he the ally of Wellington and Blücher, he could not serve

them better. Were he the mortal enemy of France, he could not serve her worse.

Overwhelmed by the sudden consciousness of his terrible mistake, the heroic Ney was almost demented. "Oh, that all these English balls were buried in my body!" Impotent rage, vain remorse: *the English were up, and all of Wellington's delays and blunders were remedied.*

Verily, those who say there is no such thing as *Luck* have never studied the history of the Hundred Days!

The fatality of the day was, of course, the pendulum swing of D'Erlon's corps—a pendulum which swung first toward Napoleon, then toward Ney, reaching neither. Had not the Emperor turned it back when on its way to join Ney, Wellington would have been crushed. Had not Ney recalled it when it was in sight of the Emperor, Blücher would have been destroyed. But Napoleon took it away from Ney, and Ney took it away from Napoleon, and neither got to use it.

D'Erlon's corps of 20,000 men was utterly lost to the French, although it was on the march all day and burning to be in the fight. Nothing in military history equals the ill-luck

of this day. In the first place, Soult's order to D'Erlon was ambiguous. D'Erlon did not understand it, and the inexperienced staff-officer, Forbin-Janson, was unable to explain it. This accounts for D'Erlon showing up at the wrong place and creating consternation among the French which delayed the final blow and saved Blücher.

In the second place, Soult sent only one staff-officer, and this one did not carry out orders. *He did not inform Ney.*

An experienced staff-officer would have understood the necessity of notifying Ney of the Emperor's orders to D'Erlon, for the Emperor had placed D'Erlon under the immediate command of Ney. As it was, Marshal Ney was needing D'Erlon as badly as the Emperor needed him, and was expecting him every minute. Therefore, he continued to send urgent, peremptory orders that D'Erlon should hasten to join him.

Even when General Delcambre, sent by D'Erlon after D'Erlon was well on his way back to Ligny, reported the retrograde movement to Ney, the insubordinate Marshal flew into a passion and sent General Delcambre back with an imperative order that D'Erlon

should march on Quatre Bras. In taking upon himself to overrule his Emperor, he did not even consider the lateness of the hour, which made it impossible for D'Erlon to join him in time to be of any service.

CHAPTER VII

While it was not disorganized or demoralized, Blücher's army was in great peril. Two of his army corps were concentrated at Wavre, one was at Gembloux, and the fourth at Wandesett. Had the French been vigilant, these separated corps might have been overwhelmed in detail. Through the carelessness of videttes, the lack of enterprise in the leaders of reconnoitering parties and the unpardonable neglect of General Exelmans, neither Napoleon nor Grouchy was informed of the movement of the Prussian corps.

After Grouchy was given command of 33,000 troops to pursue the Prussians, the delays in starting, the slowness of the march, the lack of harmony between Grouchy and his two lieutenants, Vandamme and Gérard, made the "pursuit" the most futile on record.

How it was that an army of 70,000 Prussians could get lost to the French, then found, then lost again, is something that the untutored civilian labors in vain to understand.

Yet that is the truth about it. The morning after the battle of Ligny the French did

not know what had become of the Prussian army. They began to hunt for it. The search was clumsy and far afield. But at length Thielman's corps was located at Gembloux. Grouchy's entire army might have enveloped and crushed it. Not being attacked, Thielman sensibly retired, and when the French entered Gembloux they did not even know what had become of those Prussians. A strange "pursuit," truly.

Although he still had two hours of daylight, Grouchy decided that the "pursuit" had been pushed far enough for one day, and he postponed further activities until the morrow. During the night he received intelligence that the whole Prussian army was marching on Wavre. That Wavre was on a parallel line to the line of Wellington's retreat, and that Blücher's purpose might be to succor Wellington when necessary never once entered Grouchy's head. On the contrary, he believed that Blücher was making for Brussels and would not tarry at Wavre. Yet he knew that the Emperor was expecting a battle *just where that of the next day was fought.*

Then why not put his 33,000 men nearer to the Emperor than Blücher would be to Wellington? To do so he had but to cross

the little river Dyle and march along its left bank. Wavre is on the left bank of the Dyle, and therefore he would have to cross it in any event, going to Wavre. And by maneuvering on that side of the river he could the more readily keep in communication with the Emperor and succor him in case of need. That Napoleon expected Grouchy to do this is shown by the orders which he gave to General Marbot to throw out cavalry detachments in that direction. On the morning of the fateful 18th the well-rested troops of Grouchy might have marched at three. Yet they were not ordered to move till six, and did not actually get under way until about eight. When the French of Grouchy left Gembloux for Wavre, *the Prussians had already been four hours on the desperate march to Waterloo.*

Having at length got his army off, the admirable Grouchy rode as far as Walhain, where he entered the house of a notary to write a dispatch to the Emperor. Having done this,—it was now about ten o'clock,—Marshal Grouchy coolly sat down to his breakfast. At this hour the Prussian advance guard had reached St. Lambert, and Wellington knew it. And here was Napoleon's lieutenant, placidly working his way to

those historic strawberries, blissfully ignorant of the fact that his stupendous folly had wrecked Napoleon's last campaign.

Upon this breakfast enter the excited officers who have heard the opening guns at Waterloo. "A rear-guard affair, no doubt," thinks the admirable Grouchy. But soon the distant thunder and the cloud of smoke tell of a battle, a great battle—a battle of which men will talk as long as there are human tongues to wag, as long as there are human hearts to feel.

"The battle is at Mont-Saint-Jean," says a guide. And that is where the Emperor thought the fight would be. "We must march to the cannon," says Gérard. So says General Valezé. But Grouchy pleads his orders. "If you will not go, allow me to go with my corps and General Vallin's cavalry," pleads Gérard. "No," said Grouchy; "it would be an unpardonable mistake to divide my troops." And he galloped away to amuse himself with Thielman, as Blücher had meant that he should do.

So, all day long, while the Emperor strained his eyes to the right, looking, looking, oh how longingly! for his own legions,

his own eagles, Grouchy was in a mere rear-guard engagement with Thielman.

When Bulow appeared like a sudden cloud in the horizon, the Emperor hoped it was Grouchy. When the cannonade at Wavre reached La Belle Alliance, the Emperor fancied that the sound drew nearer—that Grouchy was coming, at last. The agony of suspense which drew from Wellington the famous "Blücher, or night," could only have been equalled by the storm which raged within the Emperor's breast—the storm of impotent rage, and of regret that he had leaned so heavy upon so frail a reed as Grouchy.

The positive order which the Emperor sent to Grouchy, after the appearance of the Prussians at Chapelle-Saint-Lambert, were delivered in time for a diversion in Bülow's rear which would have released Napoleon's right. But Grouchy decided that he would obey this order *after* he had taken Wavre. As he did not take Wavre until nightfall, he might just as well have been openly a traitor to his flag. During the whole of two days he had been repeating "my orders, my orders," and his apologists are forever prating about those orders; but

what about this last order, hot and direct, from the field where all was at stake? How could a victory over Thielman be anything but a trivial affair in comparison with the tremendous conflict going on over there at Mont-Saint-Jean?

Ah, well, he took Wavre, licked his Thielman, extricated his army very cleverly from a most perilous position made for it by the disaster of Waterloo, got back into France in admirable shape, and had the satisfaction of knowing that he had made a record unique in the history of the world.

As the man who did not do the thing he was sent to do, Grouchy has no peer. As a man who, in war, exemplified the adage of "penny wise and pound foolish," Grouchy is unapproachable. As a man who,—by an almost miraculous union of inertness, stupidity, pig-headed obstinacy, complacent conceit, jealous pride, and inopportune wilfulness,—caused the last battle of the greatest soldier of all time to become the synonym for unbounded and irremediable disaster, Grouchy occupies a lofty, lonely pillar of his own—a sort of military Simeon Stylites.

CHAPTER VIII

WATERLOO

Why had the Emperor been so late in getting into motion on the morning of the 16th? Why had he not started at five o'clock, and caught Zieten's corps unsupported? Why did he give Blücher time to concentrate? Why did he not press the attack farther on the evening of the day when the Prussians were in full retreat? Why did he fail to give Grouchy the customary order to pursue with all the cavalry?

Satisfactory answers cannot be made. That Napoleon's conceptions were as grand as ever is apparent, but his failure in matters of detail is equally clear. Perhaps mental and physical weariness after several hours of sustained exertion and anxiety, furnish the most plausible explanation of these errors.

At any rate, when he threw himself on his bed at Fluerus on the night of the 16th, Napoleon was worn out. Yet he did not know the true state of the Prussian army, nor what Ney had done at Quatre Bras. Soult sent no

dispatches to Ney, and Ney sent none to Soult.

The Emperor went to sleep *believing* but not *knowing* that Blücher had been so badly battered that it would take him at least two days to gather together the remnant of his army. More unfortunately still, Napoleon believed that the Prussians had taken up a line of retreat which would carry them beyond supporting distance of the English.

To the contrary of both these convictions of the Emperor, the bulk of the Prussian army was preserving its formation, and Gneisenau, acting for Blücher, who was believed to be dead or a prisoner, had directed the retreat on Wavre. Thus the Prussians were keeping within supporting distance of the English, although this was not Gneisenau's motive in issuing the order. He chose Wavre for the reason that at Wavre the separated corps of the army could best reunite.

The morning of the 17th of June dawns, and Napoleon has Wellington in his power. *But neither Wellington nor Napoleon knows it.* The Duke does not know what has become of the Prussians, and the Emperor does not know that the English are where he and

Ney, acting in concert, can utterly destroy them.

It seems incredible that Ney sent no report to Napoleon, and that the Emperor sent no courier to Ney. But that is just the fact. It was not until *after* Wellington had received the report of the Prussian retreat, had realized his peril, and was backing away from it, that Napoleon awoke to a sense of the opportunity which fortune had held for him all that morning, while he lay supinely upon his bed, or idly talked Parisian politics with his officers.

When he *did* realize what might have been, he was ablaze with a fierce desire to make up for lost time. Too late. Wellington was already at a safe distance, in full retreat on Brussels, and Ney had not molested him by firing a single shot.

Soon the Emperor reached Quatre Bras, but what could he do? True, he could dash after the English cavalry and chase it as the hunter chases the hare, but even the rearguard of the enemy made good its escape.

They say that as the black storm cloud spread over the heavens to the North the hills behind were still bathed in sunlight, and that as the English officer, Lord Uxbridge,

looked back, he saw a horseman suddenly emerge from a dip in the road and appear on the hill in front—and they knew it to be Napoleon, leading the pursuit.

A battery galloped up, took position, opened fire. And as it did so, the thunder from the storm-cloud mingled with the thunder of the guns, and the great rain of June 17th had begun to pour down.

"Gallop faster, men! For God's sake, gallop, or you will be taken!" It was Lord Uxbridge speeding his flying cavalry.

After them streamed the French. Almost, but not quite, the English were overtaken. So close came the French that the English heard their curses and jeers, just as Sir John Moore's retreating men heard them as they took to their boats after the death-grapple at Corunna.

Torrents of rain were pouring down. The roads became bogs. Where the highways passed between embankments each road was a rushing stream. Horses mired to their knees. Cannon carriages sank to the hubs. The infantry was soaked with water and covered with mud. The labor of getting forward was exhausting to man and beast. But the French pressed on until they reached the

hills opposite the heights of Mont-Saint-Jean. Upon those heights, and between the French and Brussels, Wellington had come to a stand.

A reconnaissance in force caused the English to unmask, and Napoleon was happy. The English army was before him. That he would crush it on the morrow, he had not the slightest doubt. He not only believed this, but had good reason to believe it. Had not the Prussians gone away to Namur, out of supporting distance? Such was his firm conviction, based partly on the knowledge of what would be the natural course for the retreating army to take, and partly on the report of his scouts. Besides, had he not sent Grouchy, Vandamme, and Gérard to take care of Blücher?

Could the great soldier believe that his lieutenants, trained in his own school by years of service in the field, could manage so stupidly as to allow the Prussians to take him in flank, while he was giving battle to the English?

Regarding the vexed question as to whether the order given to Grouchy was sufficient, a civilian can but say that it would seem that Grouchy ought to have known what was expected of him even if he had not been spe-

cially instructed. The very size of the army entrusted to him was enough to denote its purpose. The fact that Napoleon was going after Wellington and was sending Grouchy after Blücher said as plainly as words, "You take care of Blücher, while I take care of Wellington." By necessary implication, the mere sending of Grouchy with 33,000 men after Blücher meant that Grouchy's mission was to keep the Prussians off Napoleon while Napoleon was fighting the English.

This was the common sense of it, and the Emperor had every reason to believe that no intelligent officer of his army could possibly understand it otherwise.

Therefore, when he saw that Wellington meant to give battle, he felt the stern joy of the warrior who expects a fair fight and a brilliant victory.

To Napoleon, a victory there meant even more. It meant the possible end of arduous warfare, an era of peace for France, the return to his arms of his son, and the crowning of his wonderful career by the continuation and completion of that system of internal improvements and beneficent institutions to which Europe owes so much. Therefore,

when he plowed through the mud, drenched with rain, and went the rounds of his army posts, peering through the mists toward the English lines, listening for any sound of an army breaking camp to retreat, he was happy to be convinced, "They mean to fight."

No one could shake his belief that the Prussians had gone off toward Namur. That they had retired by a parallel line with the English was incredible. That Blücher would appear on the morrow, *and strike his flank within two hours after the signal for battle was fired,* was a thought which could not possibly have been driven into Napoleon's head.

In vain did his brother Jerome tell him of what a servant of the inn had overheard the English officers say, that very afternoon—that Blücher was to come to their aid the next day. Napoleon scouted the story. To his dying day, it is doubtful whether he believed that Wellington's decision to stay and fight was based upon the practical certainty that Blücher would come to his aid. To that effect Blücher had given his promise—and Wellington knew that Blücher was not the man to make his ally a false promise to induce him to fight.

Although Napoleon had slept but little on Saturday night (the 17th) and had been out in the rain and mud for hours making the rounds of his outposts, a distance of two miles, he seemed fresh and cheerful at breakfast, and chatted freely with his officers.

There was a question of fixing the hour of the attack. To give the ground time to become drier and firmer under sun and wind, hour after hour was suffered to pass. All this while the more energetic Blücher was plowing his way toward the field, over ground just as wet. To a civilian it would seem if the soil was firm enough to march on, it was firm enough to fight on. If the Prussians could drag their artillery through the defiles of the Lasne, the French should have been able to handle theirs in the valleys of Smohaine and Braine-L'Alleud.

Therefore, it would seem to this writer that on the morning of June 18th, when Napoleon Bonaparte sat idly in his lines waiting for sun and wind to harden the ground, he had no one but himself to blame for giving Blücher time to reach the field. During these hours of waiting it appears singular that no details of the plan of attack were discussed. It seems strange that no preparations were

made to cannonade the château of Hougoumont and its outbuildings and walls. It seems strange that no battery was planted to shell the farmhouses of La Haye-Sainte. It seems equally strange that nails and hammers were not provided for the spiking of captured cannon.

One of the most horribly fascinating of historical manuscripts is the warrant against his enemies which Robespierre was signing when Bourdon broke into the room and shot him. There is the incomplete signature of the erstwhile Dictator, and there are the stains made by the blood which spurted from his shattered jaw.

Even more profoundly interesting are a few words written in pencil by Marshal Ney, upon an order which Soult was about to send to General D'Erlon: "Count D'Erlon will understand that the action is to commence on the left, not on the right. Communicate this new arrangement to General Reilé."

Why had the Emperor changed his mind? At St. Helena, he appears not to have recalled the fact that he changed his plan of battle because Ney reported that a small stream, which was on the line of advance to the right,

had been swollen by the rains and it was impassable.

Stonewall Jackson was one of the many military experts who studied the field of Waterloo, and who said that the attack should have been made on the right. It was there that Wellington was weakest. Had the French struck him there, Hougoumont would have been worthless to him and would not have cost such a frightful loss to the French. But the Emperor, at the last moment, changed his mind.

THE LAST BATTLE

"*Magnificent! Magnificent!*" exclaimed Napoleon as he overlooked the legions that were moving over the plateau, going into position.

Seated on his white mare, his gray dust-coat covering all but the front of the green uniform, on his head the small cocked hat of the Brienne school, silver spurs on the riding-boots which reached the knee, and at his side the sword of Marengo—the great Captain was never more radiant, never surer of success than now.

Vive l'Empereur! rolled in thunder tones

as the troops marched before him. The drum-beat was drowned in the mighty shout of the legions as they went down into the valley of the shadow of death. It was, on the vastest scale, the old, old cry of the gladiators as they trooped past the imperial box to take their stations in the arena—*"Caesar! we, who are about to die, salute you!"*

As the regiments passed in review, the eagles were dipped to the Emperor, every saber flashed in the sun, every bayonet waved a hat or cap, every pennon was wildly shaken, every band struck up the national air, *"Let us watch over the safety of the Empire"*—and over everything, drowning the roll of the drums and the call of the bugles, rose that frantic cry of frenzied devotion, *"Vive l'Empereur!"*

Napoleon's eye dilated, his breast expanded with pride—for the last time, the very last time. Proud he had often been, and in most instances he had won the right to be so. On the heights of Rossomme and on the plateau of La Belle Alliance, he was, this Sunday morning, deservedly proud. He had reconquered an empire without drawing the sword, had almost done what Pompey had

boasted that he could do—*called forth an army by the stamp of his foot;* had smitten his enemies and put them to rout, and now while his lieutenant, on the right, would "cut off the Prussians from Wellington,"—as Grouchy had written that he would,—he, Napoleon, would crush the English, and so win back peace with honor.

A more magnificent army than that which he proudly views has never been marshalled for battle, for here are heroes whose record reaches all the way back through Montmirail, Dresden, Wagram, Jena, Borodino, Austerlitz, Eylau and Friedland, to Marengo.

And Napoleon is proud, this last time.

In the field Napoleon had 74,000 men and 246 guns; Wellington had 67,000 men and 184 guns. But the British position was strong. The hollow road of Ohain gave them the benefit of its trench for 400 yards. There were barricades of felled trees on the Brussels and Nivelles roads. There was a sand-pit which served as an intrenchment, and the strong buildings and enclosure of Hougoumont, La Haye-Sainte and Papelotte were formidable defences.

Yet General Haxo, who was sent by Na-

poleon to inspect the enemy's lines, reported that he could not perceive any fortifications!

In addition to the hollow road, the natural advantage of the position of the English was that, from the crest which they were to defend, the ground fell away so as to form a declivity behind the crest, and along this hillside the English were partially sheltered from the French fire and altogether hidden from view. From where he was, Napoleon could not see more than half of Wellington's army. Another natural protection to the English position were the tall, thick hedges, impassable to the French cavalry.

All things considered, the attempt of the Emperor to break the center of an English army, so well posted as this, can be fairly compared to Lee's efforts to storm the heights of Gettysburg. And in each case the attack was made in ignorance of vitally important facts.

Well might Napoleon afterward reproach himself for not having reconnoitered the English position.

At thirty-five minutes past eleven the first gun was fired.

Reillé had been ordered to occupy the ap-

proaches to Hougoumont, and had entrusted the movement to Jerome Bonaparte. At the head of the 1st Light Infantry he charged the wood held by Nassau and Hanoverian carbineers. An hour of furious fighting in the dense thickets—in which General Bauduin was killed—resulted in clearing the woods of the enemy; but on getting clear of the thicket the French found themselves coming upon the strong walls and the large buildings of the château.

Jerome had no orders to lead infantry against a fortress like this, but he did it, nevertheless. Wellington had thrown a garrison into Hougoumont; the walls were loopholed for musketry; and the French were led to slaughter. It was impossible for infantry to break these thick walls of solid masonry, yet Jerome, in spite of the advice of his chief of staff and the orders of his immediate superior, Reillé, persisted until Hougoumont had cost the lives of 1,600 Frenchmen and had called away from the main battle nearly 11,000 men.

Why it was that the walls were not breached with cannon before the infantry was led against them can only be explained upon the hypothesis that the Emperor never once

thought his brother capable of so mad an undertaking.

It was nearly one o'clock when Napoleon formed a battery of eighty guns and was ready to make a great attack on the English center. Before giving word to Ney, who was to lead it, the Emperor carefully scanned the entire battlefield through his glass.

What is that black cloud which has come upon the distant horizon, there on the north-east? Every staff officer turns his glasses to the heights of Chapelle-Saint-Lambert. "Trees," say some. But Napoleon knows better. Those are troops. But whose? Are they his? Is it Grouchy? Suppose it is the advance guard of Blücher!

A hush, a chill falls upon the staff. A cavalry squad is sent to reconnoiter; but before it has even cleared itself of the French lines, a prisoner taken by Marbot's hussars is brought to the Emperor. This prisoner was the bearer of a letter from Bülow to Wellington to announce the arrival of the Prussians! Even now the Emperor does not realize his danger, does not suspect the truth of the situation, for he believes that Grouchy is so maneuvering as to protect the French right and to prevent the Prussians from falling on

his flank. Napoleon sends him the dispatch: "A letter which has just been intercepted tells us that General Bülow is to attack our right flank. We believe we can perceive the corps on the heights of Chapelle-Saint-Lambert. Therefore do not lose a minute to draw nearer to us and to join us and crush Bülow, whom you will catch in the very act."

Immediately the Emperor detached the cavalry divisions of Domon and Subervie to the right to be ready to hold the Prussians in check, and the 6th Corps (Lobau) was ordered to move up behind this cavalry.

Thus from half-past one in the afternoon Napoleon had two armies with which to deal.

Had he suspected that Blücher had left Thielman's corps to amuse Grouchy while the bulk of the Prussian army was hastening to join Bülow on the right flank of the French, the Emperor would probably not have gone deeper into this fight. Expecting every moment to hear the roar of Grouchy's guns in Bülow's rear, the Emperor now ordered Ney to the grand attack on the English line.

Eighty cannon thundered against Mont-Saint-Jean, and the English batteries roared in reply. For half an hour the earth quivered with the shock, and in Brussels, twenty miles

away, every living soul hung upon the roar of the guns. Merchants closed their stores; business of all sorts suspended; eager crowds hurried to the Namur gate to listen, to question stragglers from the front; timid travellers, who had come in the train of Wellington's army, hastily secured conveyances and fled by the Ghent road. In the churches, women prayed.

Is Blücher the only man who could play the game of leaving a part of his troops to detain the enemy? Cannot Grouchy leave 10,000 men to die, if necessary, in holding Thielman, while with the remainder he pushes for the distant battlefield?

There are those who say he could not have arrived in time had he made the effort. How can anybody know that? Certainly his cavalry could have covered the distance, and the infantry in all probability would have arrived in time to take the exhausted English in the rear, after their advance to La Belle Alliance, and cut the surprised troops to pieces.

Thus while the Prussians were chasing Napoleon, Grouchy would have been chasing Wellington, with the net result that the Prussians, within a few days, would have been caught between Napoleon's rallied troops

and the victorious army of Grouchy. But it was not to be so. Grouchy did precisely what Blücher wanted him to do—spent the golden hours with Thielman at Wavre.

After the cannonade of half an hour, Ney and D'Erlon led the grand attack on the English position. And a worse managed affair it would be difficult to imagine. Instead of forming columns of attack, admitting of easy and rapid deployment, the troops were massed in compact phalanxes, with a front of 166 to 200 files, with a depth of twenty-four men. The destruction which canister causes on dense masses like these, exposed in the open field, is something horrible to contemplate. The error was so glaring that one of the division commanders, Durutte, flatly refused to allow his men to be formed in that way.

Where was the eagle glance of Napoleon that he did not detect the faulty formation which Ney and D'Erlon were making? Is such a detail beneath the notice of a commander-in-chief?

If the Emperor saw the mistake he gave no sign, and the troops of D'Erlon, ashamed of not having been in the fights of the 16th,

rushed into the valley shouting, *"Vive l'Empereur!"*

"Into the jaws of death" they marched, for as they crossed the valley and mounted the slopes beyond, the English batteries cut long lanes through their deep, dense lines and they fell by the hundreds.

A part of the attacking force was thrown against the walls and buildings of La Haye-Sainte, and here, as at Hougoumont, infantry were slaughtered from behind unbreached walls. But the great charge against the English position went on heedless of such detail as the attack on La Haye-Sainte. Through the rye, which was breast-high, and over ground into which they mired at every step, the columns of D'Erlon pressed upward, crying *"Vive l'Empereur!"*

The defenders of the sand pit were driven out and thrown beyond the hedges. The Netherlanders and Dutch broke, and in their flight behind the hedges disordered the ranks of an English regiment. The Nassau troops, which held the Papelotte farm, were dislodged by the French under Durutte, and the great charge seemed to be on the point of succeeding. But the faulty formation of the attacking columns ruined all. When the at-

tempt was made to deploy, so much time was consumed that the English gunners had only to fire at the dense mass of men to litter the earth with the wounded and the dead. The carnage was frightful.

Picton, the English general, seeing the efforts of the French to deploy, seized the opportunity, led a brigade against the French column, delivered a volley, and then ordered a bayonet charge. Pouring from behind the hedges, the English rushed upon the confused mass of French, and a terrible fight at close quarters took place. It was here that Picton was killed.

While the column of Donzelot was engaged in this desperate struggle, the column of Marcognet had broken through the hedges and was advancing to take a battery. But as the French shouted "Victory," the sound of the bag-pipes was heard, and the Highlanders opened fire. Owing to their faulty formation, the French could only reply by a volley from the front line of a single battalion. Their only hope was to charge with the bayonet. While desperately engaged with the Scotch troops, Lord Uxbridge dashed upon them with his cavalry.

The issue could not be doubtful. The

French could not deploy; the confused mass could not defend itself against infantry or cavalry. They were raked by cannon shot, and by musketry, and the English cavalry hacked them to pieces. The slaughter was pitiable and was mainly due to a formation which gave these brave men no chance to fight.

In their exultation the English carried their charges too far. The Scotch Greys, indeed, dashed up the slope upon which the French were posted, captured the division of batteries of Durutte and attempted to carry the main battery. Napoleon himself ordered the countercharge which swept the English cavalry beyond La Haye-Sainte.

All this while, Jerome Bonaparte was still assaulting Hougoumont. Defenders and assailants had each been reinforced. The Emperor ordered a battery of howitzers to shell the buildings. Fire broke out, and the château and its outbuildings were consumed. The English threw themselves into the chapel, the barn, the farmer's house, a sunken road, and continued to hold the position.

It was now half-past three o'clock. Wellington and Napoleon were both becoming uneasy—the former because Blücher's troops

were not yet in line, the latter because he had begun to doubt that Groüchy would come. The Emperor ordered Ney to make another attack on La Haye-Sainte. The English, from behind hedges of the Ohain road, repulsed it.

While the movement was being made the main French battery of eighty guns cannonaded the English right center. "Never had the oldest soldiers heard such a cannonade," said General Alten.

The English line moved back a short distance so as to get the protection of the edge of the plateau. Ney, mistaking this movement, ordered a cavalry charge. At first he meant to use a brigade only, but owing to some misunderstanding that cannot be cleared up, this intended charge of a brigade drew into it practically all the cavalry of the French army. Napoleon himself did not see what was happening. From his position near the "Maison Decoster" inn, Napoleon did not have a view of the ground in which the cavalry divisions were forming for this premature disastrous attack.

The English saw it all, and were glad to see it. What better could they ask? Their lines had not been disordered by artillery or

by infantry; what had they to fear from cavalry? Nothing. They sprang up, formed squares and waited. The English gunners, whose batteries were in front, were ordered to reserve their fire till the last moment, and then to take shelter within the squares.

As the French advanced, they were exposed to the full fury of the English batteries. The slope up which the cavalry rode is not steep, but the tall grain and the deep mud made it extremely difficult.

Yet this magnificent body of horse, in spite of dreadful losses, drove the gunners from the batteries and took the guns!

But they had nothing to spike them with, they could not drag them away, they did not even break the cannon sponges.

Therefore when they found that the English infantry was not in disorder, but in squares upon whose walls of steel no impression could be made; when they fell into confusion because of their own numbers crowded in so small a space, when Uxbridge's five thousand fresh horses were hurled upon the jaded French, and they fell back before the shock, the English gunners had but to run back to their guns and renew the murderous cannonade.

Yet no sooner had the wonderful soldiers of Milhaud and Lefebre-Desnoette reached the bottom of the valley than they charged up the muddy slopes again. Once more they drove in the cannoneers: once more they carried the heights, and fell upon the English squares. At this moment some of the English officers believed that the battle was lost. But Napoleon watched the cavalry charge with uneasiness and called it "premature." Soult declared that "Ney is compromising us as he did at Jena."

The Emperor said, "This has taken place an hour too soon, but we must stand by what is already done." Then he sent to Kellerman and Guyot an order to charge. This carried into action the remaining cavalry. It was now after five o'clock.

In a space which offered room for the deployment of only one thousand, eight or nine thousand French cavalry went to fight unbroken infantry!

A storm of cannon balls broke upon these dense masses, and the slaughter was terrific, but nothing stopped the French. Again they swept past the guns, again they assaulted the squares, time and again and again—while an enfilading fire emptied saddles by the hundred

at every volley. Some of the squares were broken, an English flag was captured, the German Legion lost its colors, the French horse rode through the English line, to be destroyed by the batteries in reserve. Wellington had taken refuge within a square, but he now came out and ordered a charge of his cavalry. For the third time the French were driven off the plateau.

Yet Ney, losing his head completely, led another cavalry charge! Again ran the gunners away from the batteries, and again the cavalry broke on the squares. In fact, the wounded and dead were piled so high in front of the squares that each had a hideous breastwork before it which made it almost impossible for the French to reach the English.

Inasmuch as the Emperor had decided to support Ney in his cavalry charges, it seems strange that neither he nor Ney used the infantry.

The 6,000 men of the Bachelu and Foy division were close by, watching the cavalry charges and eager to support them. As Ney was personally leading the cavalry, it is easy to understand how he came to forget everything else; but the Emperor's failure to send in this infantry is not readily understood.

Only after the fourth charge of the cavalry had been repulsed, did Ney call in the infantry. But he was too late; the English batteries tore this closely packed body of men to shreds, and in a few minutes 1,500 had fallen and the column was in retreat.

It was now six o'clock. La Haye-Sainte was at length taken, with great loss of life on both sides. From this point of vantage Ney assailed the English lines. The sand pit was again abandoned by the enemy, and Ney used this and a mound near La Haye-Sainte to pour a destructive fire upon the center of Wellington's line. The French infantry charged, drove the English, captured a flag, and there was now a gap in the very center of the English line. Wellington was in a critical condition, and had the Old Guard charged *then,* neither Blücher nor night might have come in time.

Ney saw the opportunity and sent to the Emperor for a few infantry to complete the work. "Troops?" exclaimed Napoleon to the officer who brought Ney's message. "Where do you expect me to get them? Do you expect me to make them?"

At the same moment, one of Wellington's lieutenants sent for reinforcements. "There

are none," he said. Suppose that at this moment Napoleon could have hurled on the English line the 16,000 men who were holding back the Prussians!

Yet the fact is that the Emperor had in hand fourteen battalions which had not been engaged, and what amazes the civilian is that, after refusing to take advantage of the impression Ney had made upon the enemy's line, Napoleon organized another general advance against Mont-Saint-Jean an hour later.

Ever since two o'clock the Prussians had been operating on the French right wing. Bülow's corps was having a bloody struggle with Lobau and the Young Guard. Time and again the Prussians were thrown back; time and again they returned to the attack. At the instant when Ney was demanding more troops, Lobau's corps was in retreat and the Young Guard was driven out of Plancenoit. Napoleon's own position on La Belle Alliance was threatened. To prevent the Prussians from coming upon his rear, the Emperor sent in eleven battalions of the Old Guard which, with fixed bayonets and without firing a shot, drove the Prussians out of Plancenoit and chased them six hundred yards.

It was now after seven o'clock. There were still two hours of daylight. In the distance were heard the guns of Grouchy; the sound seemed to draw nearer. The Emperor, counting too much on Grouchy always, believed that at last his tardy lieutenant was engaged with the bulk of the Prussian army, and that he himself would have to deal with the corps of Bülow only.

The Emperor swept the field of battle with his glass. On the right, Durutte's division held Papelotte and La Haye and was advancing up the slope toward the English line. On the left, Jerome had stormed the burning château of Hougoumont, and the Lancers had crossed the Nivelles road. In the center, and above La Haye-Sainte, the French were driving the enemy along the Ohain road. The valley was crowded with the wrecks of broken French regiments.

Placing himself at the head of nine battalions of the Old Guard, Napoleon led it down into the valley, spoke to his men briefly, and launched them against the enemy. It was too late. A deserter had given Wellington full notice of the preparations for the attack and he had thrown reinforcements into the weak portions of his line. The arrival of Zeiten's

Prussians relieved the flanking squadrons of Vivian and Vandeleur, and Wellington now had 2,600 fresh horsemen to throw into the fight.

At full gallop, the Prussian Commissioner to the Allies, Muffling, rode to Zeiten, exclaiming, "The battle is lost if you do not go to the Duke's rescue."

On came the Prussians, striking the French flank from Smohain, and in spite of all the personal exertions of the Emperor, a panic spread throughout that part of his army.

Couriers had been sent all along the line to tell the French that Grouchy was approaching. Yet the battle on the right where Lobau and the Young Guard were struggling to keep Bülow back must have been known to thousands of the troops. Then, when they actually saw the Prussians taking them in flank, all their fears of treachery were intensified and they were filled with terror.

But the Emperor had raised his arm to strike the enemy one final blow and he could not stay his hand. Even had he tried to recall Ney, D'Erlon, Reillé, it is doubtful whether the situation would have been improved. There was so much confusion, so

many shattered commands, that an orderly retreat had become impossible.

Encouraged by the report that Grouchy had come, the charging columns shouted *"Vive l'Empereur!"* and passed on.

Freeing himself from the fifth horse which had been shot under him that day, the dauntless Ney went forward on foot, sword in hand. Losing terribly at every step, the French advanced up the slope. They took some batteries, they almost gained the Crest; but suddenly Maitland's Guards, 2,000 strong, sprang up out of the wheat where they had been lying concealed, and poured a deadly volley into the French. Why was there no officer with presence of mind enough to cry then, *"Give them the bayonet"?* That was the one hope of the French. Instead of doing this, the officers tried to place the men in line so as to exchange volleys with the enemy. Fatal mistake. Wellington, noting the confusion and the hesitation, took advantage of it like a good soldier.

"Up, Guards, and at 'em!" cried the Duke.

"Forward, boys, now is your time!" cried Colonel Saltoun.

The French, fighting frantically, were beaten back to the orchard of Hougoumont.

Here a fresh battalion (4th Chasseurs) came to the relief of the retreating French, and the English returned rapidly to their own lines.

Once more the Old Guard moves up the muddy slope, under the tremendous cannonade of the English guns. As they cross the Ohain road, an English brigade opens four lines of fire upon their flank; Maitland's Guards and Halkett's brigade oppose them in front; and a Hanoverian brigade, coming from the hedges of Hougoumont, fire upon them from the rear. The finishing blow is Colborn's charge with fixed bayonets.

"The guard gives way!" rings over the battlefield—a wail of despair, of terror.

"Treachery!" is the cry throughout the field.

Now is the time to make an end of this panic-stricken army, and Wellington, spurring to the crest, waves his hat—the signal for an advance all along the line.

As night closes in, the English army, 40,000 strong, rush down the bloody, corpse-strewn slope, trampling the wounded and the dead, crying, "No Quarter!"

The drum, the bugle, the bagpipe quicken the march of the English and the flight of the

French. Making no stand at La Haye-Sainte, none at Hougoumont, none anywhere, the French army, already honeycombed with suspicion, dissolves in terror. Never had so strong a war-weapon shown itself so brittle.

Napoleon was at La Haye-Sainte, forming another column of attack which he meant to lead in person, when he looked up and saw the Old Guard falter and stop.

"They are confused. All is lost!" Hoping to stem the tide of the English advance and to establish rallying points for his flying troops, he formed four squares from a column of the Old Guard which had not been engaged. These he posted above La Haye-Sainte. As the English horsemen came on, they dashed in vain against these walls of steel and fire. But nothing so frail as four squares could arrest the advance of 40,000 men. The English cavalry poured through the gaps which separated the squares and continued their headlong pursuit of the terrified French.

When the English infantry came up and raked the squares with musketry; when the English batteries began to hail grapeshot upon them, the Emperor gave the order to abandon the position. Attended by a small es-

cort he galloped to the height of La Belle Alliance.

The three squares fell back, slowly, steadily, surrounded on all sides by the enemy. With the regularity of the paradeground these matchless soldiers of the Old Guard halted to fire, to reform their ranks, and then move on again.

"Fugitives from the battlefield looked back from the distance and marked the progress of the retreat by the regular flash of these guns." On that black valley of death and vast misfortune it was the repeated flashes of lightning irradiating a stormcloud.

Filled with admiration and sympathy, let us hope, an English officer cried out, "Surrender!"

And Cambronne shot out the word which Victor Hugo indecently glorified, but which with convincing emphasis spurned the very thought of surrender. The squares, unbroken, reached the summit of La Belle Alliance, where Cambronne fell, apparently dead, from a ball which struck him in the face.

It was here that the Prussians, who had at last broken in on the right, bore down on the squares. Assailed by overwhelming odds—

infantry, artillery, cavalry—they were destroyed.

Several hundred yards back there were two battalions of the Old Guard, formed in squares. Within one of these squares was the Emperor. Planting a battery of 12-pounders, he made a final effort to check the pursuit and to rally his troops. The Guard's call to arms was sounded, but the fugitives continued to pour by and none rallied. The battery exhausted its ammunition and the gunners, refusing to fly, were cut down by the English hussars.

Upon the squares themselves the enemy could make no impression until overpowering masses of Prussian and English infantry came up. Then the Emperor ordered a retreat. In good order these veterans marched off the field, stopping from time to time to fire a volley upon their pursuers.

At the farm of Le Caillou the battalion formed in column, and on its flank slowly rode the Emperor, reeling with fatigue, so that he had to be supported in the saddle. His bridle reins were loose upon his horse's neck.

CHAPTER IX

As the moon came out that night, her cold face was hateful to the fleeing French, for it lit the roads for the merciless pursuers.

The exhausted English had halted at La Belle Alliance.

The Prussians came thundering on, and the two victors, Wellington and Blücher, embraced. Each called the other the winner of the day. Justly so—for each *was* the winner. To success both had been necessary.

The Prussians had made a most fatiguing march in the morning, and had fought with desperation for many hours, but they alone had strength left for the pursuit. Wellington's troops fell down among the dying and the dead, to rest and sleep. But not until they had cheered the Prussians passing by. "Hip, hip, hurrah!" shout the English, while the bands play.

The Prussians go by, singing Luther's hymn, "Now praise we all our God."

And then these devout Christians hot-foot upon the track of other Christians, hurry on to a moonlight hunt—vast, terrible, murder-

ous. These Prussians remember the pursuit after Jena; yes, and the pursuit after Austerlitz; yes, and the long years of French military occupation of the Fatherland. And now it is their turn.

"As long as man and horse can go—push the pursuit!" cried Blücher.

Not a great many Prussians are needed. A few cannon to make a noise, a few bugles to sound the charge, a few drums to send terror ahead—these, with about 4,500 troops, will be quite sufficient to chase Napoleon's army like a flock of sheep.

Forty thousand Frenchmen, unwounded, as brave a lot of men as ever stepped into line, are now so crushed by unexpected disaster, so filled with the terror of sheer panic, that no human power can check their stampede.

Ney has tried it, vainly. Napoleon has tried it, vainly. They abandon the artillery, they throw away their guns, they cast off their accouterments, intent only on running for dear life. They cut through the fields, they fight for passage on the road, they murder one another in their frantic efforts to get on.

The Prussians chase them, cut them down, ride over them—the roads, the fields, the woods are strewn with slaughtered French-

men. If any stand is made and a few of the firmer rally, the first blare of Prussian trumpets sets them running again. The 4,500 Prussians dwindle, as the chase lengthens, until scarcely a thousand pursue. But the French have lost their senses. The mere blare of a Prussian bugle throws them into agonies of fright. One drummer-boy, galloping on horseback, a dozen cavalrymen to yell the Prussian "Hourra!" are enough to keep the stampede going.

"No quarter!" cry the pursuers. Yet after Ligny Napoleon had gone, in person, to take care of the Prussian wounded, and had threatened the Belgian peasants with the terrors of hell if they did not succor these sufferers. "God bids us love our enemies," said the Emperor to these peasants. "Take care of the wounded, or God will make you burn." But the English had cried "No quarter!" as they charged down from Mont-Saint-Jean, and now the Prussians are repeating the cry and slaughtering, with indiscriminate fury, those who surrender, those who are wounded and those who are overtaken.

So mad is the panic of the French that at Gemappe, where the little river Dyle is only about fifteen feet wide and three feet deep,

they have a frightful crush at the narrow bridge and never once think of wading across.

Here, once more Napoleon vainly endeavors to stop the rout. The Prussians appear, beat the drum, blow the trumpets, fire cannon, and the thousands of Frenchmen fight madly with each other for the privilege of running away. They slash each other with their swords, stab each other with their bayonets, and even shoot each other down.

To appreciate the state of mind of this fleeing army it is necessary that one should have a good idea of what happens to the crowd in a packed theater when the red tongues of the flames are seen in the hangings and the cry of *"Fire! Fire!"* smites the startled ear. The horrible scene which invariably follows is the outcome of exactly the uncontrollable, unreasoning terror which made the flight from Napoleon's last battlefield such a disgrace to human nature.

The moon which held a light for the pursuit silvered also the slopes where the great battle had been fought, shone upon the unburied corpses that still lay at Ligny and Quatre Bras, shone upon 25,000 Frenchmen, 6,000 Prussians, and 10,000 of the English

army, who lay on the field of Waterloo; shone also upon other thousands who lay dead or dying on the futile battle-ground of Wavre. Within three days and within the narrow radius of a few miles more than 70,000 men had been shot down—for what?

For what? To force upon the French a King and a system which they detested, and to prevent the spread of democratic principles to other countries where kings and aristocracies were in power.

Creasy numbers Waterloo among the Twelve Decisive Battles of the World, but it does not deserve the rank. It did not give democratic principles anything more than a temporary set-back. It did not permanently restore the Bourbons. It did not even keep the Bonaparte heir off the throne. Much less did it settle the principle that one nation may dictate to another its form of government.

In his old age, Wellington was asked to write his Memoirs. "No," he answered. "It wouldn't do. If I were to tell what I know, the people would tear me to pieces."

I think I understand. If the ruling oligarchs of England,—Eldon, Castlereagh,

Pitt, Canning, Liverpool, Bathurst,—had revealed the inner secrets of the Tory administration, the last one of them would have been torn to pieces—deservedly.

The man-hunt rolls off toward the Sambre, the drum dies away in the distance, the horror of the retreat goes farther and farther away, —while the moon looks down upon the English army, asleep on La Belle Alliance, upon the blood-stained valleys and slopes that lead to Mont-Saint-Jean, upon the smouldering ruins of Hougoumont, of La Haye-Sainte, of Papelotte, of Plancenoit. There are dead men everywhere. Everywhere are dying men, dismounted cannons, broken swords, abandoned guns and knapsacks, dead horses, and mangled horses that scream as they struggle with pain and death, wounded men who moan and groan and curse their fate.

A mile wide and two miles long, this strip of hell writhes beneath the unpitying stars; and perhaps the most awful sound that shocks the ear and the soul is that choked yell of terror and agony of the officer who is being clubbed to death with a musket by the night prowler who wants the officer's watch, decorations and money.

Enter the ground of the Château of Hougoumont, pass the shattered buildings and go into the flower garden. Here was once the beauty of nature and the beauty of art, combined. This morning, when the sun broke through the mists, these formal walks were bordered by the bloom of flowers; these balustraded terraces were fragrant with the incense of the orange and the myrtle. The birds were singing in the garden overhead, along these quiet covered walks in the old Flemish garden, vine clad with honey-suckle and jessamine, where many a word of love had been spoken as lovers wandered here in years long past.

And now it is one of the frightful spots of the world, reeking with blood, cumbered with dead and dying men, torn by shells, gutted by fire. The well is ever so deep and ever so large, but is never so deep nor so large as to hold all the dead and the dying. To-morrow it will be filled. The dauntless defenders and the fearless assailants will embrace in the harmony of a common grave. And for many and many a year the peasant at his fireside at night will tell, in hushed tones, of the sounds—the groans, the faint

calls for help—which are said to have been heard coming from the well, nights after its hasty filling in.

Few partisans of Napoleon now contend that he was free from serious fault in this, his last campaign.

First of all, he should have made his appeal to the people, put himself once more at their head as the hero of the French Revolution, remained in France, and nationalized the war.

Again, he should not have placed two such generals as Vandamme and Gérard under Grouchy.

He showed no vigor in following up his victory at Ligny, and made a capital error in not breaking up the retreating foe with cavalry charges.

He lost a great opportunity at Quatre Bras.

On the night of the 17th he should have sent definite orders to Grouchy, and should have hearkened to Soult when he was urged by that thorough soldier to call in at least a portion of Grouchy's force.

He took the reports of Haxo and Ney, and

based the battle upon their erroneous reports. The Napoleon of earlier years would have *gone to see for himself.*

He did not have a good view of the field and consequently missed detailed movements of immense importance.

He treated with too much scorn the opinion of Soult and Reillé (who had tested the English soldier in Spain), when they warned him that the English, properly posted and properly handled—as Wellington could handle them —were invincible.

He made the attack without maneuvering, in just the bare-breasted, full-face way that best lent itself to bloody repulse.

The premature cavalry movement which contributed most to the final disaster was under full headway,—too far advanced to be stopped,—before he knew that it was contemplated.

In holding off the Prussians, the Emperor displayed his genius, directing every movement himself. On the field of Waterloo, he left too much to Ney and Jerome. Had he taken Ney out of the fight at the time that he recalled Jerome, the issue might have been different.

The last grand charge should not have been

made at all. He should have stopped, as Lee did at Gettysburg, in time to save his army, for by this time he *knew* that Grouchy would not come. To stake so much on one last desperate throw was the act of a man who was no longer what he had been at Aspern and Essling when he withdrew into the Island of Lobau.

When the Emperor was giving the order for the last great charge, General Haxo would have remonstrated. "But, Sire—" he began. Napoleon flapped his glove lightly across Haxo's face and said, "Hold your tongue, my friend. There is Grouchy who will give us other news." He had mistaken Bülow's cannonade for Grouchy's.

One can understand what was passing in his mind when he said to Gourgaud, a few weeks later, "Ah, if it were to be done over again!"

On Wellington's side the management was superb. It was practically faultless. He made the most of every advantage, and made the most of the errors of his enemy.

With this exception: He left 18,000 of his men at Hal, four or five miles away, protecting a road which he feared the French might take. But with Napoleon facing him,

here at Mont-Saint-Jean, the 18,000 men were no longer needed at Hal; and no one has ever been able to explain why Wellington did not call them in during the early morning of the 18th.

In other books than this you will read of how the wreck of Napoleon, the man, and the wreck of Napoleon, the Emperor, found their way to Paris; how the well-meaning but weak-headed La Fayette, dreaming of an impossible Republic, worked in reality for the Bourbon restoration in working against Napoleon; how the Chambers, honeycombed by the intrigues of Fouché, demanded the second abdication; how the wreck of Napoleon floated aimlessly down the current of misfortune; how he signed away his throne; how the masses thronged about his palace, wildly clamoring for him to put himself at the head of a national uprising; how he sends his empty coach and six through the mob, and makes off by the back way in a cab; how he stops at Malmaison, weeps for his lost Josephine, listens to all kinds of counsel, takes none, and has no plan; how the soldiers, marching past in straggling detachments, cheer him with the same old enthusiasm, and

how he calmly remarks, "They had better have stood and fought at Waterloo."

Napoleon was no longer the volcanic man of action, of connected ideas, of sustained exertion, of inflexible purpose. The Waterloo campaign had been a sputtering of the candle in the socket—a brief eruption of a Vesuvius that made Europe quiver; and then all was over.

From Malmaison he is ordered off by Fouché, and he meekly obeys. At Rochefort he dawdles, doubts, delays, and does nothing. Logically, he becomes a prisoner to those by whom he has been beaten.

To St. Helena, and a few years of torture; to hopeless captivity and the bitter inbrooding that eat the heart out; to the depths of humiliation and the canker of impotent rage; to weary days of depression and dreary nights of pain; to a long agony of vain regrets, of wrath against fate, of soul-racking memories—to these go Napoleon Bonaparte, the greatest man ever born of woman.

At last, the reprieve comes. At last there comes the day when the little man can no longer torture the big one. Sir Hudson Lowe may at length rest easy—the sweat of the final pain gathers on his captive's brow.

English sentinels may slacken their vigilance now—the death rattle is in the prisoner's throat.

The storm comes up from out the wrathful sea, and the terrible anger of the tempest beats upon the tropical rock. The thunder, peal on peal, volleys over the crags, and the glare of the lightning lights up the track of devastation. Within the renovated cow-house, and within a room which will soon be used again as a cow-stall, is stretched the dying warrior.

What was it that the storm said to the unconscious soldier? By what mysterious law, yet to be made plain, does the sub-consciousness move and speak when deep sleep or the delirium of disease has paralyzed the normal consciousness of man? We do not know. In poetry, the sub-conscious produces the weird "Kubla Khan"; in music it notates "The Devil's Sonata." It is the sub-conscious which often gives warning of evil to come; it is the sub-conscious that sometimes tells us the right road when all is doubt.

As the thunder volleyed over Longwood, and the roar of the storm held on, the dying Captain was strangely affected. Just such

thunder had rolled over his head that Saturday night and Sunday morning, when he went the rounds of his outposts in the drenching rain—which may have been the main cause of his loss of Waterloo. He and the faithful Bertrand had made those night-rounds alone, and Napoleon, as he stopped to listen to the thunder, muttered, "We agree."

It must have been that in his delirium he fancied he was again on the front line, listening to the storm which preceded his last battle.

"The Army! The head of the Army!" he muttered. "Desaix! Bessiéres! Hasten the attack! Press on! The enemy gives way—they are ours!"

With a convulsive start he sprang up, out of the bed, and got upon his feet. Montholon seized him, but he bore the Count to the floor. Others rushed in; he was already exhausted, and they put him back in bed. Afterward he lay still, and the boat drifted on, quietly on, toward the bar.

The storm had passed away, and the Emperor, lying on his back, with one hand out of the bed, fixed his eyes "as though in deep meditation."

Those about the bed thought they heard

him say, "France! Josephine!" Then he spoke no more.

A light foam gathered on the parted lips. There was peace on his face—for the pain had done what it came to do.

As the clear sun dipped beneath the distant rim of the sea, Napoleon died.

It was May 5th, 1821.

In Hillaire Belloc's magnificent study of Danton, the author makes reference to a legend which is said to be current among the peasants of Russia.

It is a story of "a certain somber, mounted figure, unreal, only an outline and a cloud, that passed away to Asia, to the East and North. They saw him move along their snows through the long, mysterious twilight of the Northern autumn, in silence, with the head bent and the reins in the left hand, loose, following some enduring purpose, reaching toward an ancient solitude and repose. *They say that it was Napoleon.* After him, there trailed for days the shadows of the soldiery, vague mists bearing faintly the forms of companies of men. It was as though the cannon-smoke of Waterloo, borne on the light west wind of that June day, had received the spirits

of twenty years of combat, and had drifted farther and farther during the fall of the year over the endless plains.

"But there was no voice and no order. The terrible tramp of the Guard and the sound that Heine loved, the dance of the French drums, was extinguished; there was no echo of their songs, for the army was of ghosts and was defeated. They passed in the silence which we can never pierce, and somewhere remote from men they sleep in bivouac round the most splendid of human swords."

A SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER

BLÜCHER

"Captain Blücher has full permission to resign, and to go to the devil, if he likes."

Thus endorsed by Frederick the Great, Captain Blücher's written request for leave to retire from the Prussian Army went into effect.

Yet this headstrong, boisterous, hard-drinking, hard-riding, hard-fighting, indefatigable Blücher became one of the most thorough and effective soldiers that ever led an army to battle. He possessed some of those very qualities which made Washington, Cromwell, and Frederick so great. He was tireless, he was iron-willed, he was true-hearted, he was fearless, he was not to be discouraged, and he never could be whipped so badly that he did not come back to fight again, harder than ever.

Something of a national hero, something of a typical German soldier, something of an ideal patriot, he was something of a ruthless Goth. He had gone to England after the

Campaign of Paris, in 1814, and rode conspicuously in the great procession through London. As he looked upon the wealth displayed on every side, he growled, "What a town to sack." Yet he was a devoted husband, a most loyal subject; a generous, faithful, daring ally.

He had fought against the French a greater number of times than any other commander. He had been whipped oftener and harder than any other commander. He had been captured, and had grazed annihilation oftener than any other commander.

After Jena, his king owed his escape from being made prisoner to a bold falsehood—to General Klein—that an armistice had been declared. At Bautzen he just did get out of the trap Napoleon laid for him, and he did it because Ney, in making the turning movement, stopped to do some fighting which gave the Prussian his warning. In 1814 he just did miss being bagged time and again—but he missed it. And now in 1815 his pluck, his dash, and his luck were to save him, as by fire, again and again. He was beloved by his troops. Wherever he sent them, he was ready to go himself. He shirked nothing, and was whole-hearted in everything. Like

the Russian soldier, Skobeleff, he was sublime on the field of battle, and led his men in person. With a kindly word, "Come, comrades, follow me!" he could lead them into the jaws of hell. With a plea like this, "Comrades, I gave my word to be there; you won't make me break it!"—he could inspire them to superhuman efforts, to drag the heavy guns through the mud, and thus reach his ally in time to save.

Heading a cavalry charge at Ligny, his horse was shot under him, and the French passed over him twice—once in advancing, once in retreating—and the darkness was his friend each time. Dragged by one of his officers from under his horse, he was borne off the field bruised, almost unconscious. In two days, he is leading charges again. Too generous to suspect an ally, he stands and fights at Ligny on Wellington's promise of support, and when the support doesn't come he still does not suspect his ally of calculating selfishness. His staff *does*. Hence it was that his staff opposed him when he wished to yield to Wellington's plea for help, on the night of the 17th. Long did Gneisenau resist Blücher, contending that Wellington meant to leave them in the lurch again. But at

length the chief of staff consented that the promise of relief be sent, and old Blücher was happy. The promise was sent, and Wellington *knew* it would be kept! Hence he fought at Waterloo, with the knowledge that his task consisted in holding out until the Prussians could arrive.

The heroic struggle of Blücher to make progress over the terrible roads, his enormous energy, his magnificent devotion to the common cause, his unselfish renunciation of credit for the victory which was due to him more than to Wellington, raise him to the pinnacle of military glory. No student of this last campaign of Napoleon can fail to reach the conclusion that while Wellington was delaying at Brussels, sending out orders not suited to the condition of things at the front, and taking his supper at Lady Richmond's ball, it was Blücher who was where he should have been, and doing what he should have done. But for the skilful retreat of Thielman, followed by the bold concentration at Ligny and the stubborn fight there, the French would have gone into Brussels without firing a shot.

On the night of the 18th, Blücher followed the pursuit as far as Genappe, where his strength gave out. He went into the inn to

go to bed, but before undressing, wrote his wife:

"On the 16th I was compelled to withdraw before superior forces, but on the 18th, in concert with my friend Wellington, I have annihilated the army of Napoleon."

To a friend he wrote:

"The finest of battles has been fought, the most brilliant of victories won. I think that Bonaparte's history is ended. I cannot write any more, for I am trembling in every limb. The strain was too great."

Blücher was seventy-three years old. Napoleon and Wellington were nearly the same age, both being born in 1769, and therefore forty-seven years old.

Blücher was notoriously a hard drinker, and had been so all his life. Both Napoleon and Wellington were extremely sober men; yet Blücher had shown more energy than the other two together.

NEY

A mournful interest must always attach to Ney.

As Napoleon said, his "Bravest of the Brave" was no longer the same man. First of all, in this campaign he was not handled right. The Emperor should have employed him sooner, or not at all: should have trusted him further, or not at all. The manner in which he was caught up at the last moment and cast into the activities of the campaign was most unwise.

In spite of the bad behavior of Ney in 1814, the troops were glad to see him in their midst. Their nickname for him was "Red-head," and they called him this to each other as they saw him join the Emperor at Beaumont. "All will go well now—Red-head is with us!"

But Ney was not at himself. There is no other phrase that will do,—all of us know what it means. When the orator whom we *know* to be a heaven-born orator fails to move us, we say, "He is not at himself." When the brilliant writer is dull; when the expert mechanic is awkward; when the painter's brush misses the conception, when the sculptor's chisel cannot follow his thoughts, when the master musician makes discord, we have nothing better to say than "He is not at himself."

So it was with Marshal Ney. Advancing upon Quatre Bras, he stopped, afraid of going too far. When had Ney been timid before?

Realizing at length what was expected of him, he fought furiously to take the position which would have been his without a fight had he simply not stopped in sudden fear the evening before. Then, having been the Ney of old on the 16th, he became timid again on the morning of the 17th, and let Wellington draw off without any attempt to molest the retreat. Why no reports to the Emperor all that day of the 16th? Why none on the night of the 16th? Very near to the treason for which officers are shot, was this sullen silence. He was not at himself. Then at Waterloo, the Ney of old comes out again. He is not only bold, but rash. He is possessed of a devil of fight. He is no longer a general: he is just a reckless brigadier. Headlong charges, blind rushes, frantic management which is calamitous mismanagement; premature sacrifice of cavalry, false formation of columns of attack, then wild rage and despair, and prayers for death! The soldier never lived that fought harder and longer than Ney at Waterloo. As darkness closed

down, and the torrents of retreat ran past him, this heroic and ill-starred soldier, his face black with powder smoke, his uniform in tatters, the blood oozing from bruises, a broken sword in his hand, cried out, "Come and see how a Marshal of France dies!" But alas, the flood of disaster bore him away, and this leonine Frenchman was left to make a target for French muskets. All of Ney's horses had been killed under him, and he owed his life—a bad debt, as it turned out—to a faithful subaltern.

The restored Bourbons were determined to put Ney to death. Instead of leaving his fate in the hands of his old companions in arms, as his lawyer wanted him to do, Ney foolishly gave preference to a trial by the civilians of the Chamber of Peers. This tribunal condemned him, and he was shot. So says History.

But Tradition is persistent in claiming that the execution was a fake: that blank cartridges were fired, that Ney fell unhurt, and that his body was spirited away, and that he was shipped off to America, and that he lived in North Carolina, a school-teacher, until he died a natural death.

Many a time I have ridiculed this tradition, and marshaled in convincing array the evidence against it. I must confess, however, that a statement in the book of Sir William Fraser, called "Wellington's Words," startled me. He expresses a doubt as to the genuineness of the execution of Marshal Ney, *and Sir William was close to Wellington.* Indeed, the account which Sir William gives of the alleged execution is somewhat suggestive of a mock execution.

It was a beautiful morning, and the Garden of the Luxembourg was filled with children, attended by their nurses, taking the morning air, amid the trees and birds and flowers. A closed carriage drove up to the gate and four men, leaving the carriage, entered the garden. One was Marshal Ney, the others an officer and two sergeants. The officer placed Ney against the wall, called the picket guarding the gate, gave the word "Fire!" and Ney fell on his face. The body was immediately put into the carriage and driven off. The nurses and the children had not realized what was happening. Says Sir William Fraser (who had this account from Quentin Dick, an eye-witness), "I confess

to have got a lingering doubt whether Ney was shot to death."

But Sir William himself supplies a bit of evidence which resettles my own conviction that Ney *was* shot to death. The second Duke of Wellington was invited by Queen Victoria to meet at Windsor Castle the Emperor of the French. In the train of Louis Napoleon, the French Emperor, was the son of Marshal Ney. The Emperor said, "I must introduce two great names," leading the Duke of Wellington to the Prince of Moscowa. The Duke made a low bow: the Prince did not return it. He remembered the murder of his father, and knew that the first Duke of Wellington should have prevented it. In answer to the Emperor's whispered remonstrance, Ney's son firmly declared that he did not wish to make the acquaintance of Wellington's son. To my mind this is conclusive. Had Ney's life been saved by the first Duke of Wellington, as Sir William Fraser broadly hints, two things are certain: (1) Ney's son would have known it, and (2) Ney's family would have gratefully honored Wellington's memory, instead of detesting it.

No: the lion-like Ney did not teach school

in North Carolina; he died a dog's death in the garden of the Luxembourg. A victim to the cold perfidy of Wellington, a bloody sacrifice to the vindictive ferocity of Bourbon royalism, the magnificent French soldier was shot to death by Frenchmen—shot like a dog, and fell on his battle-worn face dead, dead, while the song of birds was in the trees, and the innocent laughter of children rang in his ears. Well did he say when they were reading his death-sentence, in which all of his high-sounding titles were being enumerated, "Just Michel Ney—soon to be a handful of dust."

Full of error, yet full of virtue: pure gold at one crisis, mere dross at another; superbly great on some occasions, and pitiably weak on others; true as steel one day, unsubstantial as water the next; dangerous to the enemy on some fields, fatally dangerous to Napoleon in the last campaign, the truth remains that this strenuous soldier had been fighting the battles of France all his life, had never failed her at any trial, had never joined her enemies, and must have died of heart-break as well as bullet-wound when he heard a French officer give the word, and saw

French soldiers raise their guns to shoot him down.

Honor to the son of Ney who refused to take the hand of Wellington's son, although a Queen was the hostess, and an Emperor whispered a remonstrance!

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